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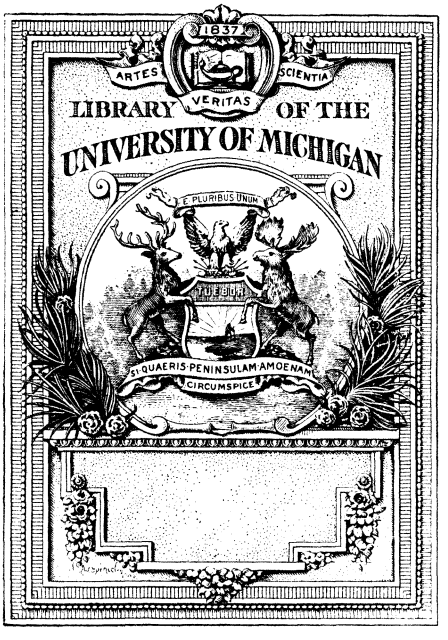

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The Tryst.

From the Picture by S. E. Waller.

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THE

WINDSOR MAGAZINE

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY

FOR

MEN AND WOMEN

VOL. IX

DECEMBER 1898 *TO MAY* 1899

LONDON

WARD, LOCK & CO., LIMITED

WARWICK HOUSE, SALISBURY SQUARE, E.C.

1899

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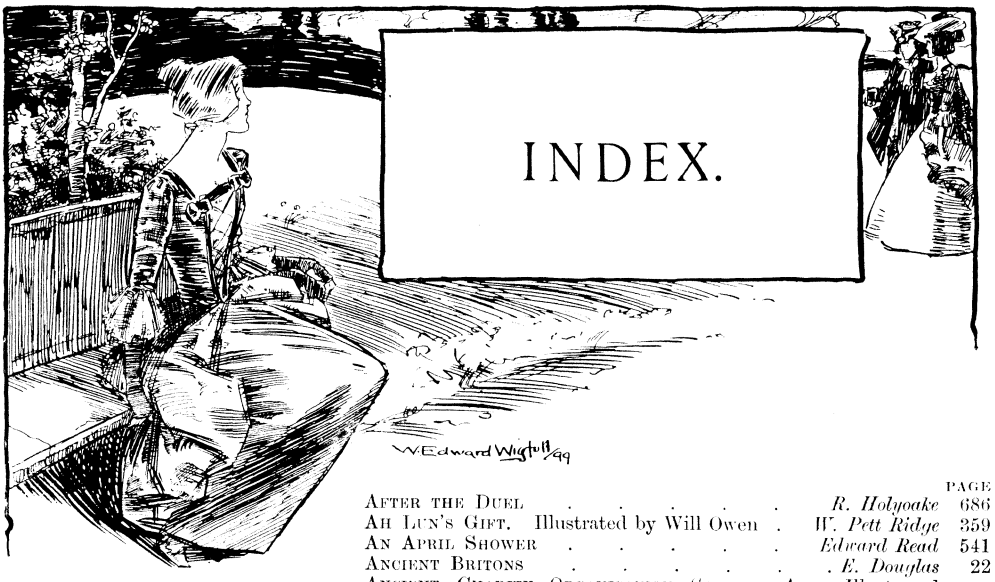

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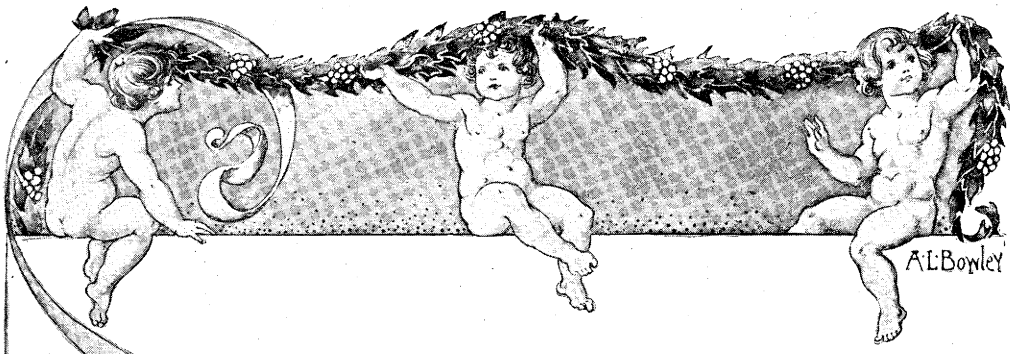


CHRISTMAS IN PICTURELAND,

AS RENDERED BY THE OLD MASTERS AND THE NEW.

BY

JOHN OLDCASTLE.

CHRISTMAS DAY—the day of the Christ Mass—however and wherever kept, has this uniformity in the keeping: it is always and everywhere the Feast of the Child—of the children. It is part of "the joy of our youth"; for it is the Eternal Child who comes—

> New every year,
> New born and newly dear,
> He comes with tidings and a song,
> The ages long, the ages long.

Mr. Ruskin says that the difference between a man of genius and an ordinary man is that the man of genius retains through life the freshness of a child; and that, perhaps, is why men of genius, in all the Christian era, have brought, in the wake of Eastern kings, the gold of their art, the myrrh of their music, the frankincense of their verse, to the crib where the Young Child lies. Even Milton, puritan among poets, was moved to numbers by that Nativity, showing us the earth seeking

> To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,

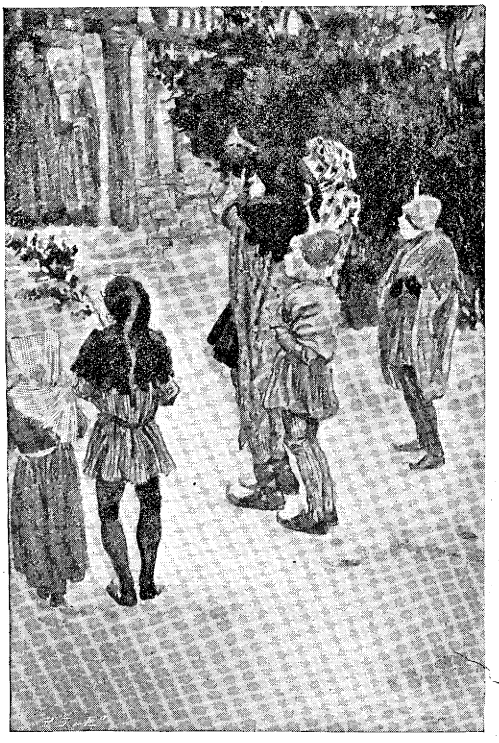
hearing the music of the spheres,

> Such music, as 'tis said,
> Before was never heard.

and seeing

> All about the courtly stable,
> Bright-harnessed angels sit in order serviceable.

As with the poets, so with the painters. They began at once—the St. Luke of the legends is already the limner of the Mother



THE CHRISTMAS WAITS.—BY R. ANNING BELL.

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and Child. The Nativity has attracted the artists of every school—Byzantines, as well as Flemings, Spaniards, Italians, pre-Raphaelite and post-Raphaelite alike. Fra Filippo Lippi and Albert Dürer, most

from the old list. It had no art before the days of Raphael; and when the Stuarts imported painters the subject was out of vogue. We waited till Sir Joshua's day for a "Madonna and Child," and we are

THE NATIVITY.

From the picture in the National Gallery, attributed by some critics to Murillo and by others to Velasquez.

diverse of men, were united in this cherished effort with Velasquez himself, foremost impressionist, if the noble Nativity be his which many attribute to him, but which in our National Gallery is now marked down to Murillo. Our own country is an absentee

hardly yet aware of it. Inquiries at art publishers' and photographers' bring an almost unanimous retort that no such picture was ever painted by that master; and perhaps the reader will know it best by the delightful article on it, entitled, "Sir Joshua and

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IN THE STABLE AT BETHLEHEM.
BY R. ANNING BELL.

veil, where it fell free, and not bent it." And yet—yes, says Mr. Ruskin, you do well to pause—"there is a 'yet' to be thought of." And it is this—that Sir Joshua, though he more than once chose Madonnas for his subjects, "perhaps, if truth must be told, painted them never; for surely this dearest pet of an English girl, with the little curl of lovely hair under her ear, is *not* one." Sir Joshua, he says, shows you the Lady where Giorgione and Correggio give you the Woman. Sir Joshua, in short, did not trust himself outside the park palings, and his delightful Strawberry Girl would never have been painted, Mr. Ruskin imagines, unless she had got in through a gap. Not for him, then, any vigils of the captured imagination by a manger in a stable. The window at Oxford which owes its design to his hand has also the same defects of its qualities, and he left still vacant—for Sir Edward Burne-Jones's later occupancy—the place of glory as the finest designer in England of a Nativity, noble in feeling, dignified in its fancy, significant in its decorative beauty. An allusion is also due to the later pictures of Mr. Strudwick and those of Mr. Fellowes Prynne.

Holbein," in the *Cornhill Magazine* of 1860, published anonymously, but bearing the unseen signature of John Ruskin on every line of it. He speaks of it as having been "long ago discarded from our National Gallery," yet as being "in placid strength and subtlest science unsurpassed, in sweet felicity incomparable." "Lily-sceptred," he says Sir Joshua is. "His power blossoms, but burdens not. Tintoret lays his line like a king marking the boundaries of conquered lands, but Sir Joshua leaves it as a summer wind its trace on a lake. He could have painted on a silken

THE HOLY NIGHT.—BY C. MÜLLER.
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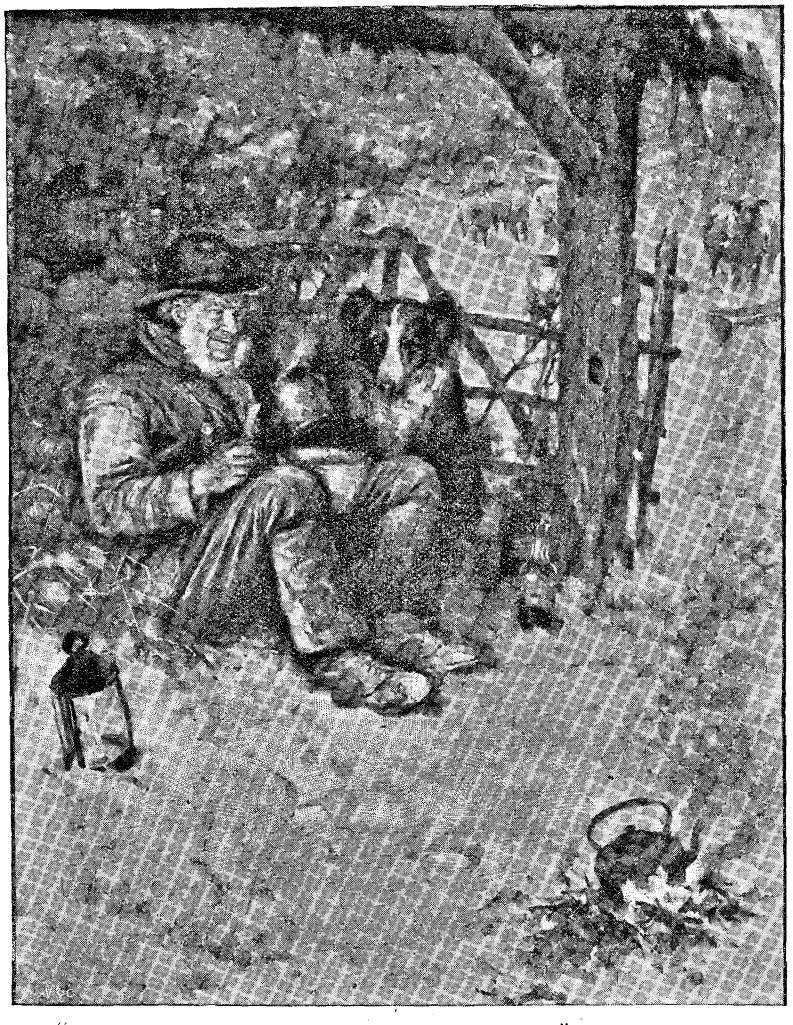
Where Burne-Jones reproduced, a contemporary German painter was to create. Not without a mystical truth did Von Uhde take the Bavarian peasant of to-day and permit him to enact, as proxy, those great things that happened of old in the little hill-country of Judea. The setting of his principal "Nativity" is purely modern.



"WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCH THEIR FLOCKS BY NIGHT."—BY WAL. PAGET.

The little angels who sing the song of the Saviour's birth, perched like birds upon the rafters of the stable, are daily German school-children; the old shepherds are Teutonic peasants, undemonstrative and unconscious, groping their way, step by step, as they move by their lantern-light. In the long, bare shed a little couch has been spread; it is flooded with light from a stable-lantern hooked to the wall. The Virgin Mother, meagre and wan, with neither youth nor beauty to take the eye, nor luxury nor dignity of physique, sits up to adore the Child Who lies helpless across her knees—a newborn child, such as no other painter of the Nativity, not Fra Angelico himself, has had the candour or the tenderness or the opportunity to paint. The same curious incongruity that is not all incongruous marks the specimen of Von Uhde's art reproduced in these pages and representing under the same guise of modern peasant humility the journey to Bethlehem. Not against this distinguished hand, because of its gentle respect for all the humiliations of human life, should be brought the accusation of vulgarity. Nay, rather let that word be given to the ready-made Italian elegance, to the facile prettiness of certain modern Frenchmen. The art of attitude should not long survive this blow from Munich. Carl Müller and Martin Feuerstein make a compromise; they long to be homely even while they are loth to break with convention.

In the England of our time the religious picture, long banished from the churches, has ceased to find a ready buyer. Yet all this while the good sense of our artists has kept them, as a body, from seeking to associate the Christmas Festival with pictures of empty triviality. They have let the subject alone, or have had mere allusions to the season such as are made in the

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A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

By Marcella Walker.

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ON THE WAY TO BETHLEHEM.

By F. Von Uhde.

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"Christmas Eve" of Sir John Millais and that of Mr. Stanhope Forbes. Allusive also, rather than proper, to the Feast of the Nativity are the immense mass of black-and-white illustrations which appear for the most part at the end of December in pictorial papers and magazines. England is great, at any rate, in her black-and-white artists, and this department is represented in our pages by Mr. Anning Bell and a group of artists chiefly associated with the *Illustrated London News*, Mr. Forestier, Mr. Sauber, Mr. Walter Wilson, Mr. Lucien Davis, and Miss Marcella Walker. Mr. Cecil Aldin has applied some of his consummate skill as a draughtsman of animals to the season that celebrates a manger and has the ox and the ass among its familiar accessories. England, too, invented the Christmas card, the first of its kind being designed, as most people will hear with surprise, only some fifty years ago by an artist still living, Mr. Horsley, R.A.

As in the case of so much else that Christianity supplied to mankind, Paganism itself had felt the need of this very Festival of the Child. It had groped about for Christmas; and the early church did but transform the existing observance of the winter solstice, and turn the Festival of the Saturnalia into the Feast of Christmas. In honour of Saturnus, father of husbandry and of the arts of life, already the world allowed itself to be turned topsey-turvey at the close of the year—servants sat at the table of their masters, presents were made, particularly to children, mummers walked the streets at night, and wax tapers blazed—those very wax tapers that are still lit upon our own Christmas trees. Reminiscent of the Saturnalia were also such masked mummers as those, for instance, of 1440, when "one Captain John Gladman, a man ever true and faithful to God and the King, and constantly sportive" (the conjunction is just as it should be), "made public disport with his neighbours at Christmas. He traversed the town on a horse as gaily caparisoned as himself, preceded by the Twelve Months, each dressed in character. After him crept the

THE HOLY NIGHT.—BY MARTIN FEUERSTEIN.
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pale, attenuated figure of Lent, clothed in herring skins, and mounted on a sorry horse, whose harness was covered with oyster shells"—a hint of the fast that ever tracks the feast in the rhythm of the life of body or spirit.

It was partly this affinity between the old and the new, and partly, too, the indecorum that certain "lords of misrule" imported into Christmas revels, that made men like Prynne denounce, and that made the Commonwealth seek to ban, the whole observance of the feast. Parliament sat on the 25th of December, "vulgarly known by the name of Christmas Day," from 1644 to 1656. Shops were ordered to be kept open; but the public could not be persuaded to buy, and at Canterbury, when the mayor ordered the market to be open, there was rioting. We know how John Evelyn kept some of those days. In 1652 he writes in his diary: "Christmas Day. No sermon anywhere, no church being permitted to be open, so observed it at home." In 1653: "Christmas Day. No churches. I was fain to pass the devotions of that blessed day with my family at home." In 1654: "Christmas Day. No public offices in churches, but penalties on observers." In 1655: "There was no more notice taken of Christmas Day in churches"—this by a new and stringent edict of Cromwell. In 1657: "I went to London with my wife to celebrate Christmas Day, Mr. Gunning preaching in Exeter Chapel. As he was giving us the Holy Sacrament the chapel was surrounded with soldiers and all the assembly kept prisoners. In the afternoon came Colonel Whalley and others from Whitehall to examine us one by one; some they committed to the Marshal, some to prison. They examined me why, contrary to the ordinance made that none should any longer observe the superstitious time of the Nativity, I durst offend. Finding no colour to detain me, they dismissed me with much pity of my ignorance. So I got home late the next day, blessed be God!"

"ON CHRISTMAS DAY IN THE MORNING."
BY A. FORESTIER.

SANTA CLAUS UP-TO-DATE.—BY LUCIEN DAVIS, R.I.

With the restoration of Charles II. came the restoration of the most beloved of English festivals; and who shall apportion the cheering that greeted that dual return, how much of it to the King, and how much to the Feast? One misses the record Evelyn might have made of the changed times, and grudges to put in its absent place an extract from the diary kept by Pepys, the mere man of the town, in 1662: "Had a pleasant walk to Whitehall, where I intended to have received the Communion with my family, but I came a little too late; so I walked up into the

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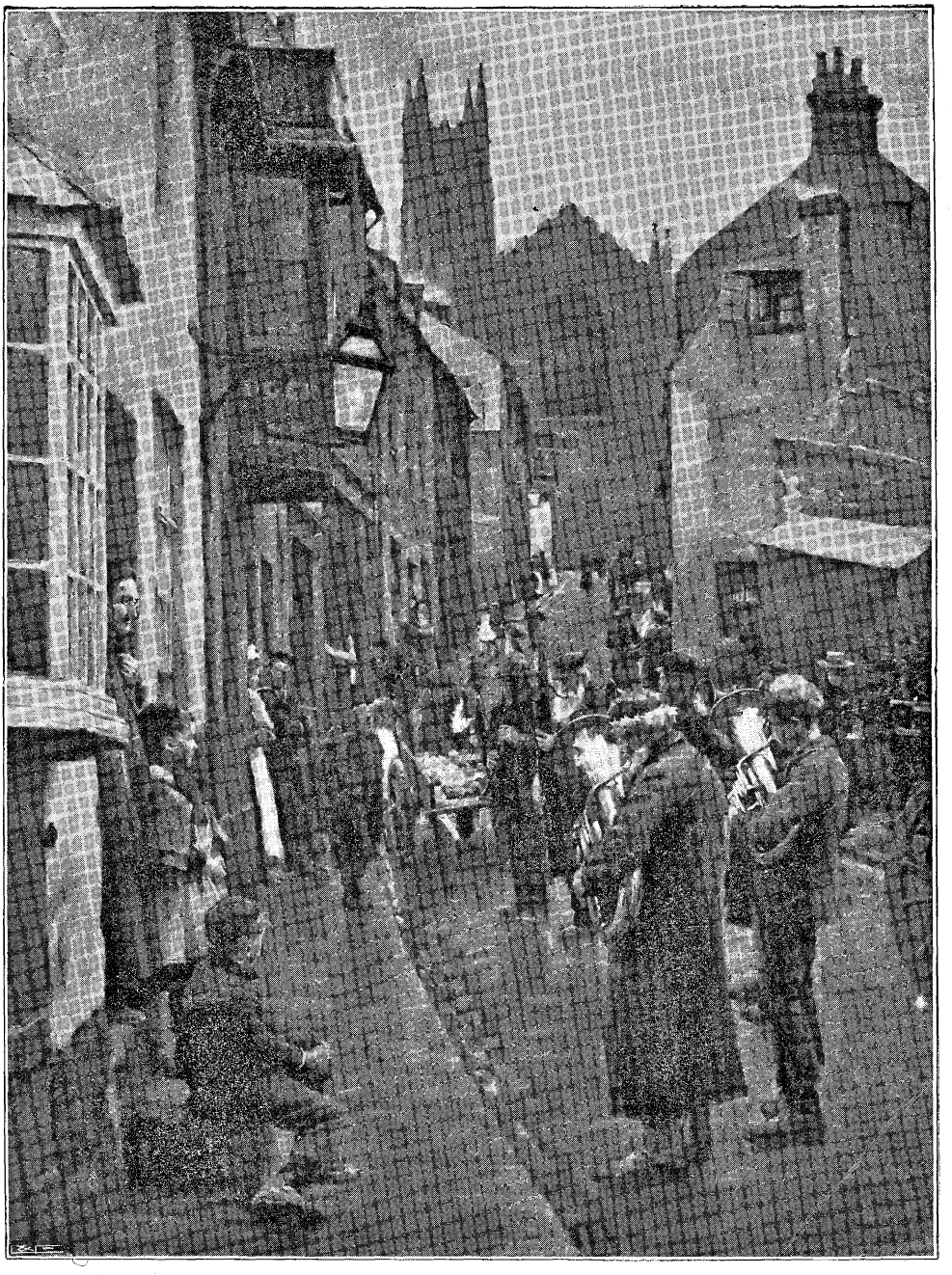

CHRISTMAS EVE.

By Stanhope A. Forbes, A.R.A.

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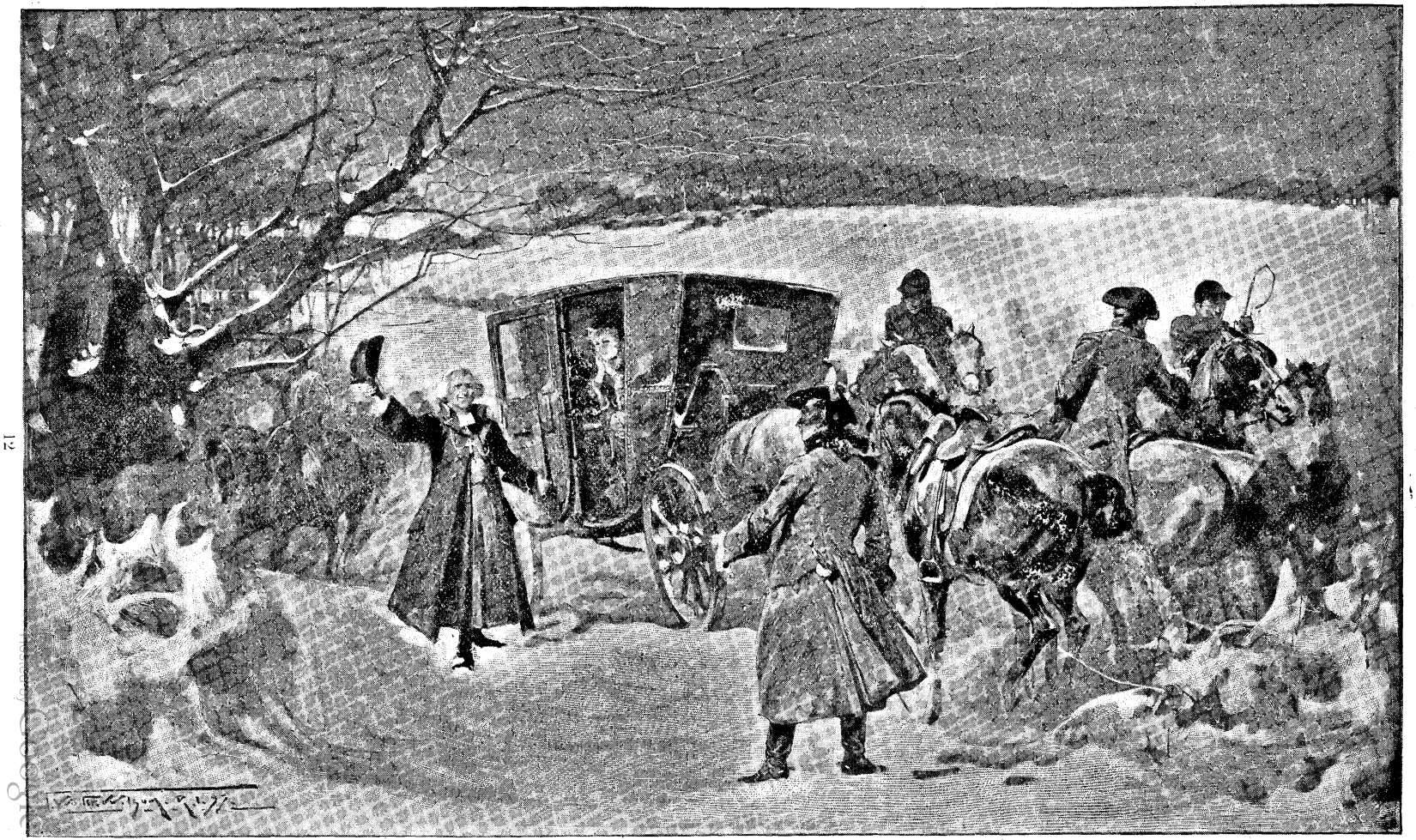

THE TABLES TURNED: THE BISHOP'S CHRISTMAS GREETING.—By T. Walter Wilson, R.I.

In olden times the etiquette of highwaymen allowed ecclesiastics to go unmolested on Christmas Day.

house and spent my time looking over pictures. By and by down to the chapel again, where Bishop Morley preached upon the Song of the Angels, reprehending the common jollity the Court put for the true joy that ought to be on these days. Upon which it was worth observing that they all laughed in the chapel. A good anthem followed, with vialls, and the King came down to receive the Sacrament. But I staid not, but calling my boy from my lord's lodgings, and giving Sarah some good advice to be sober" (perhaps Sarah, too, laughed in secret), "I walked home again with great pleasure, and here dined by my wife's bedside with great content, having a mess of brave plum-porridge and a roasted pullet for dinner, and I sent for a mince pie abroad, my wife not being well to make any herself yet." Somehow, thus early, after the proscription, the note of degeneration seems to set in. In this case it is the unwise fast that precedes the undiscriminating feast—another illustration of that rule by reaction which does those subject to it—man, woman, and child—an irremediable wrong.

MIXING THE CHRISTMAS PUDDING. BY R. SAUBER, R.B.A.

Equable is the freedom of the Festival to-day, and in the keeping of it we see, as year succeeds year, a steadily increasing expression of the divine rights of man, the sacredness of human service, and a belief in the potentiality of the children of each generation to be the redeemers of the world. These are the secrets of the human family; they have little outward show or even symbolic revelation, and they have, of necessity, little or no direct representation in contemporary art other than in their more obvious daily and domestic phases. But the rebuke addressed to him who counted any created thing common or unclean must descend to the man who does not recognise in domesticity itself, despite all that has conspired in modern England to make it dowdy, the divine essence. The Holy Family is not an image merely, but a correspondence. For the crowning paradox of Christmas must ever be that Heaven came down to earth at the Nativity, to enable earth henceforth to rise to Heaven.

This is the transforming thought which redeems from dulness, from triviality, from nothingness, everything which the spirit of Christmas informs. The mistletoe is still a sacred bough. The holly has its own high significance. May the Christmas tree of our childhood be an evergreen indeed! There is no such thing as a merely mundane Christmas, for all its rows of butcher's meat and its British plum puddings. These feasts are feasts of the

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gods, and the fit theme for celebration by the artist, the musician, and the mummer. Welcome in such a gallery as ours are the familiar illustrations of the typical old-fashioned English Christmas. May Father Christmas have sons to the end of days, and Santa Claus be "up-to-date" for ever, and the waits, whether dressed mediævally as Mr. Anning Bell (and we with him) would have them, or disguised as figures of fun in modern fashions of burlesque, be always at our doors on Christmas Eve! Even the sword yields up its function in honour of the Festival, and joins the revels of peace. It knights the beef and still holds its place by the sirloin on many an English table. Men, women, and children weary not year by year to enjoy these accessories, nor artists to depict them. *Punch* has a part in the pastime with the most serious of papers; and the Christmas card is received with an equal rejoicing in the palaces of the rich and in the hovels of the poor. Indeed, the variety of the card answers to the variety of the public taste; and firms like Messrs. Raphael Tuck and Co., and Messrs. Marcus Ward and Co., have really taken pains to reproduce with fidelity of form and colouring the Nativities of old masters, or other scenes or mysteries appropriate to the season. By degrees the Christmas card has grown into a Christmas book; and the recent revival of printing in colours has done good service alike to the publisher and to the child. In this connection two names rise to the lips among many others endeared to us by the charm of the work they signed, or by our tender memories and early associations. Those two beloved names are Kate Greenaway and Randolph Caldecott.

A CHRISTMAS PARTY.—BY CECIL ALDIN.

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How To Tell A Fairy Story

By Marie Corelli

"TELL us a fairy story!"

"Yes, tell us about the giant who ate too much pudding."

"No, tell us something about robbers."

"Oh, no! we don't want anything about robbers; tell us about the handsome prince who married the Sleeping Beauty."

"No, no, no; it is such an old story!"

A general babel of conflicting opinions deafens my ears here, and I sit patiently waiting upon the pleasure of some four or five children, the youngest of whom, little Florrie, an angelic little maid of some five summers old, I have seated on my knee, while the others form a semicircle about my chair. Florrie, by reason of her extreme youth and sweetness, is the acknowledged queen of the group, and amid the shrill clangour of tongues her small voice suddenly pipes forth—

"Don't let us have any *old* stories! Tell us something out of your own head!"

Shrieks of delight are the result of this proposition; and all the children compose themselves into attitudes of

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profound attention. It is in vain for me to declare that I have no power of invention, that I cannot think of anything, and that they had much better listen to one of the old familiar tales out of Brothers Grimm, or to a selection from that most fascinating

THE SEVEN ELFIN MAIDS.

of books, the stories of Hans Christian Andersen. No, they will accept no compromise; I must set to work immediately, and so, driven to it in despair, I begin. What I tell them, I scarcely know myself. I should, I am quite sure, be ashamed if any "grown-up" critic were to enter the room and hear me holding forth; but I certainly cannot complain of any want of appreciation on the part of my juvenile audience. I never saw such breathless interest as these young people exhibit as I wander on through the labyrinths of amazing impossibilities; and as for Florrie, her cheeks have grown scarlet, and her large blue eyes glitter with restless excitement. There is perhaps one penalty which I shall have to pay for the present good impression I create: I may have to repeat the story over again to-morrow, and the grave question occurs to me, as to whether I shall be able to remember it, for if I do not, woe betide me! The renown I may have possibly won with these young folks departs for ever!

It is not an easy thing to tell a fairy story. He or she who can do it well may be considered to have a peculiar gift or inspiration, and should be looked upon with respect accordingly. Even if inventive powers are not called in question, even should it be only a very old fairy story that the children have heard and read for themselves, over and over again; still, to be able to tell it well implies a very excellent and precise memory for the smallest details, great facility of speech, a most careful selection of the simplest and most expressive words, and a vividness of description, combined with distinct utterance and varied inflexions of voice—all of which accomplishments are, we know, objects of the most serious study with the ablest orators and lecturers.

It must also be taken into consideration that an audience of children is more exacting than an entire audience—if we could suppose such an one—of dramatic and musical critics. The critics *do* allow for blemishes, and allow so largely that if there are no blemishes they are disappointed and forthwith invent a few for the sake of the craft; but the children will stand no half measures. Neither will they tolerate anything that seems like dense stupidity on the part of the hero or heroine of the story; and if either of these interesting personages get into a terrible difficulty from which it is evident they could easily have escaped, by using a little care and foresight, the children detect the weakness in the characters at once, and frankly declare that the troubles serve them right.

It does not matter how improbable a fairy story is, so long as you are consistent in the telling of it. Hans Andersen's darning-needle talks exactly as a darning-needle might be expected to talk, did it

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possess the power of speech; and the Snow Man who fell in love with the Kitchen Stove because it looked so warm and glowing, behaved himself precisely in the manner suited to his strange circumstances and condition. A row of statues, life-size, each statue hewn out of a single diamond, are marvellous and gorgeous pictures of wealth and wonder; but we do not think them quite impossible to obtain even for ourselves, while we are deep in the study of the Arabian Nights; and a Genius who can by turns change into a tiger, a cat, a bull, a fish, a cock, or a mouse, seems a highly probable personage, whom we might be likely to meet some day. Fairy-land is more real to a child than life itself.

Watching the eager and attentive faces of children when a good fairy tale is being told or read to them, I have often wondered if there might not be some remote recollection in their minds, unconsciously to themselves, of some

THE LITTLE MERMAID AND THE PRINCE.

PUCK AND LYSANDER.

I'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.

far-away bright region where they lived long ago, brighter and more transcendent in beauty than anything we can picture in the poor way of human speech—a region from which they, the children, have come, for some inscrutable reason, to serve their time on earth—a place which they cannot remember, but which they instinctively *feel* the memory of, and that this instinctive emotion impels them to drink in with delight dazzling descriptions of the glory, loveliness, and joy of fairy-land, and to turn with a certain impatience, mingled with weariness, from the things of our prosaic every-day life to the realms of imagination for the

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satisfaction of their minds. Gradually, as the little ones grow older, the keen delight in fairy stories decreases, and the memories (if memories they have) of far-off lands become fainter, while the hard realities of life deaden the ears to the dying echo of the angels' songs with which they were once familiar. But ever and anon, in the course of their lives, you may be sure that some of them, unless they grow very hardened, will take some interest in the wild fancies of fairy-lore; because instinctively they know, as all of us know, that this world is not our rest, but that there is a "hereafter," a "fairyland," an

> Island valley of Avilion,
> Where falls not rain, or hail, or any snow,
> Nor ever winds blow loudly,—

which surpasses all the most glowing visions ever conjured up by the human mind; and anything that feeds the soul with hopeful ideas of *what might have been once*, and of *what may yet be*, is welcome to all who cherish within themselves the vivifying principles of universal love and faith.

It behoves us, therefore, in telling a fairy story, to take the matter in hand with the greatest earnestness and singleness of purpose. We must indulge in no flippancy, no sarcasm; in fact, the task should be approached in an almost reverential spirit, for first impressions take so strong a hold on the minds of children that they are with difficulty effaced, if, indeed, they are ever effaced. Most of us can remember the trifling incidents of our childhood with greater accuracy than things which occurred last week, and the lessons we learnt then were more easily acquired, and are still more freshly in our memories, than the studies at which we have laboured with infinite pains since. Do I, then, speak too strongly when I say a fairy story, or any other sort of children's story, should be told in a reverential spirit? I think not. When we consider the spotless freshness and innocence of children, and the brightness and spontaneity with which their intelligences grasp at new ideas, it is surely most incumbent upon us to be most careful as to what we tell them, and how we tell it. We must also be prepared to answer the innumerable "why's" and "what for's" with which we are certain to be interrupted in the course of the story, and to answer them as fully and as reasonably as we can.

The odd questions put by children to their elders are often most puzzling to the wisest heads; but should any of us experience a "poser," in the shape of some unlikely or strange query, it is better to be humble at once and declare frankly, "I don't know," than to beat about the bush and give an equivocal reply, which is sure to be unsatisfactory to the little questioners. Children are instinctively very just; they do not think any the worse of you for confessing ignorance on some doubtful points, but they do if they detect you trying to play the hypocrite with them. To deceive a child, in ever so slight a degree, is to undermine its confidence in you, while to break a promise once made degrades you instantly, and the footing thus lost is never quite re-established.

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I have said it is not everyone who can tell an *old* fairy story properly, but there are fewer still who are able to invent one of any interest or merit. Happy are those who have this gift, for they are the adored idols of most sweet and innocent worshippers! Once gain a reputation among the children for being able to produce new fairy tales at pleasure, and straightway you establish a claim on their regard, which no one who is not similarly gifted can disturb or dispute. Little hands drag the most comfortable chair in the room to the most comfortable corner for your occupation; a footstool is placed for your feet, a cushion offered for your head; you are fondled, hugged, and kissed with the prettiest tokens of delight and gratitude beaming in every fair little face, and when you commence your narrative you command at once the deepest silence and attention. Is there any "grown-up," catering for popular applause and favour, who can boast of receiving such tender and unqualified approbation?

It is well worth while to cultivate the art of story-telling, not only for the sakes of the young children we may be called upon to amuse, but for the older girls and boys, who, when they come for the holidays, are often at a loss what to do with themselves on rainy days, when they cannot go out. They have, perhaps, read all the story books they have over and over again; they cannot, or they will not, amuse each other; the girls get petulant and the boys morose, and things seem on the point of becoming highly disagreeable for both the young folks and the elders. It is a sort of crisis, and upon it hangs the peace of the household. One of two things must be decided: cheerfulness and contentment, or tears, sulks, and general gloom. Now comes the time for some bright-witted being to start the idea of telling stories, and if the proposer is capable of carrying out the proposition, the day is won and harmony is restored. In such a case the story selected need not always be one of fairies and genii. It may be one of hair-breadth escape, daring adventure, noble rescue, splendid valour; anything fraught with interest and related with vigour and enthusiasm will delight the boys and fascinate the girls. The story itself, as far as the mere plot goes, may be slight; it is the way of telling it that makes it interesting. We know how magnificent are Shakespeare's tragedies of "King Lear," "Macbeth," "Richard the Third," and "Othello," told as Shakespeare tells them, but what should we think of the main plots of them if we had only heard them as related by "Artemus Ward" in the following fashion:—

"What sort of sense is there in King Lear, who goes round cussin' his darters, chawin' hay and throwing straw at folks, and laughing like a silly old koot, and making an ass of himself generally? There's Mrs. Macbeth, she's a nice kind of woman to have round, isn't she?—putting up old Mac to slaying Duncan with a cheese knife while he's paying a friendly visit to the

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house. There's Richard the Three, people think he's great things, but I look upon him in the light of a monster. He kills everybody he takes a notion to in cold blood, and then goes to sleep in his tent. If he isn't a fit specimen for the gallows, I should like to know where's another. There's Iago, who is more ordinary than poison. See how shamefully he treated that highly respectable Indian gentleman, Mister Othello, making him for to believe his wife was too thick with Cassio. Observe how Iago got Cassio drunk as a biled owl on corn whisky, in order to carry out his sneaking designs. See how he works up Mister Othello's feelings, so that he goes and smothers poor Desdemona with a pillow."

Apropos of poor Desdemona, that most gentle and beautiful of Shakespeare's creations, need we ask how her young heart was won? Was it not by listening to the story of Othello's adventures?—and he must have spoken eloquently to enchant her so thoroughly. There can scarcely be a better reason for mutual love and sympathy than the valiant Moor's declaration:

> She loved me for the dangers I had passed,
> And I loved her that she did pity them.

In telling stories, fairy tales, or romantic adventures, to children, all reference to ghosts and frightful apparitions should be avoided. Nothing but pleasant and pretty fancies should linger in a child's mind after a fairy story. There are some nurses who take a pleasure in telling children what they call fairy tales, but which are in truth nothing but vulgar and exaggerated horrors, unconnected jumblings-up of ghosts, hideous appearances, and black bogies, which make timid little hearts beat faster with superstitious fright, and which often result in the children being afraid to go upstairs, and becoming perfect martyrs to nervous terror if they are left alone in the dark. This sort of story-telling is most unhealthy and pernicious. Children should be encouraged to believe that there is nothing in this beautiful world, or beyond it, that could or would do them harm. The boldness of perfect innocence is one of the most gracious and lovely attributes of childhood, and we should take the utmost pains to preserve that beautiful courage, and to strengthen it by every means in our power. If a story is to be told to the little ones before they go to bed, be careful that it is of light and fantastic construction, with nothing hideous or revolting in it to haunt the young brains during the night. If they are to dream at all, make it possible for the dreams to be of radiant fairy forms, and angelic faces, of fragrant groves of imperish-

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able flowers, and of wonderful countries where shines the glory of a perpetual spring. Youth is so sweet a flower, and blossoms for so brief a time, that it should be cherished and surrounded with the sunshine of happiness as long as possible. Sorrow comes fast enough to us all, and it is well for those who can look back upon a cloudless and happy childhood, when every day was a fresh link in the golden chain of love and peace. Whatever bitter knowledge we may have of future griefs and disappointments, that are sure to come in a greater or less degree to our little darlings if they live, let us honestly try to make them perfectly happy while they are yet children. So shall our memories be enshrined in their hearts, and sanctified there long after we have left them, and gone—let us hope—to see the fairyland of which they dream.

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

To the island Valley of Avilion,
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly.

OTHELLO AND DESDEMONA.

She loved me for the dangers I had passed,
And I loved her that she did pity them.

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Ancient Britons.

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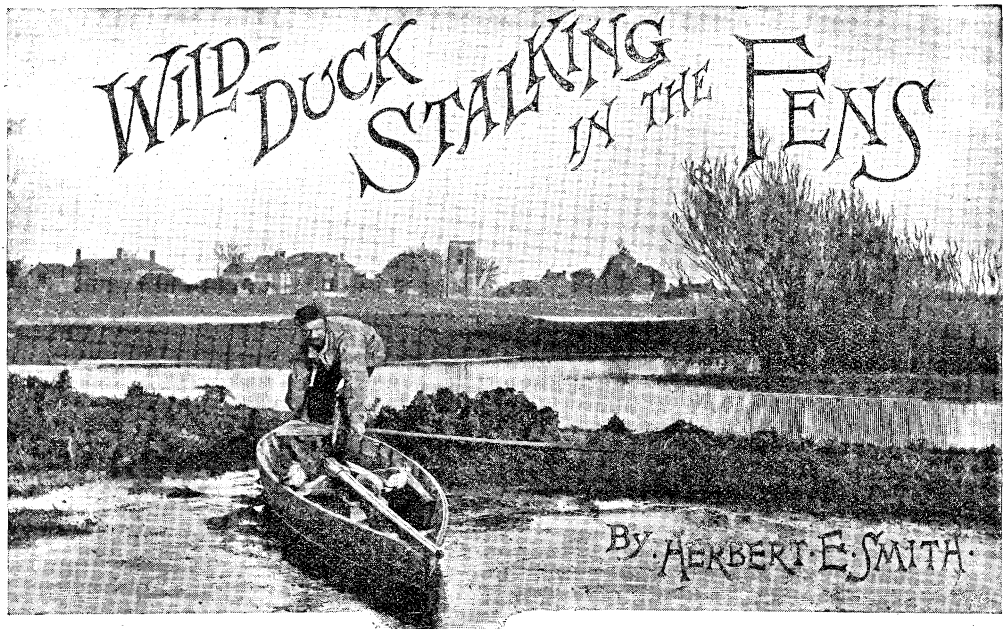
WILD-DUCK STALKING IN THE FENS

By HERBERT E. SMITH.



PUTTING OFF FROM THE VILLAGE OF COWBIT.

EVERY year as winter resumes its reign and causes wild-fowl of various kinds to seek inland shelter, the fowlers of the Fens renew their operations for beguiling their victims. As circumstances have brought about a thorough alteration in the characteristic features of the fens, so those same circumstances in a great measure account for an equally desirable change in the character of the fenmen themselves. Looking back into the early part of the seventeenth century, the fens of that period might be adequately expressed by the description that has been given to them, of "nurseries and seminaries of fish and wild-fowl." A description of the denizens of the fens of that time may not be out of place as showing what a transition has been brought about. In Mr. W. H. Wheeler's excellent treatise, "The Fens of South Lincolnshire," the following appears:—"In isolated spots scattered over the low flooded fen part live the fen slodgers, the half amphibious beings described by Macaulay, who got their living by fishing and fowling. These men lived in huts erected on the mounds scattered amongst the chain of lakes, which were bordered by a thick crop of reeds, their only way of access to one another, and of communication with the town or villages near, being by means of small boats or canoes, which they propelled with a pole, and also used in their fishing and fowling expeditions. These men were violently opposed to any attempts to alter the state of the fens, believing they had a kind of vested interest in the fishing and fowling by which they gained their scanty subsistence. Although their condition was very miserable, they nevertheless enjoyed a sort of wild liberty amidst the watery wastes which they were not disposed to give up, though they might alternately burn and shiver with ague and become prematurely bowed and twisted with rheumatism . . . . Thus the proposal to drain the fens and convert them into wholesome and fruitful lands, however important from a national point of view, as enlarging the resources and increasing the wealth of the country, had no attraction whatever in the eyes of the slodgers. But their numbers were too few, and they were too widely scattered, to make any combined effort of resistance."

Thus it will be seen that the reclamation of the fens and the consolidation of the sodden, boggy places into land, firm and suitable for cultivation, had the further result of altering the habits of the fenmen entirely, until now, in the gradual process of evolution, there is no more intelligent, industrious individual than the true-born

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fenman, for he can no longer be called a slodger in the meaning of the term as originally applied.

The district of the fenland with which this article deals, however, is in the neighbourhood of Cowbit, and termed Cowbit Wash, a portion of the fens about four miles long by one mile in breadth, between Spalding and Crowland, better known, perhaps, as one of the most famous spots in England for skating in times of frost and flood. The word Cowbit is doubtless of Saxon origin, and means cow-pasture, from the Saxon *kyr*, a cow, and *beit*, pasture. In the summer time and dry seasons this area forms a splendid grazing ground, but frequently, in the autumn and in wet seasons, is flooded over from the Roman bank, the Cowbit Road, to the high bank of the tidal-river Welland. It is at such times that the nineteenth—not the seventeenth—century slodger plies his hereditary vocation, with, as far as can be seen, rather less success as years roll on and the more effectual drainage of the district makes fowling operations more difficult. Still he is able, on occasion, to make a profitable raid upon the wild-fowl, as the subsequent facts, borne out by the evidence of the camera, which cannot lie, but only exaggerates, will abundantly testify!

DUCKS NOT YET IN SIGHT.

The period of the year with which the illustrations are connected is November. The floods are out, but there is not a sufficiency of fresh water to cover mounds and dyke banks from road to river as is frequently the case. Frost has only slightly made its appearance, but it is very cold. What care these hardy fenmen about the cold? They are protected by the most appropriate and warm, though apparently coarse and clumsy, toggery. They wear huge sea-boots about three sizes too large, and to make up for the deficiency in size of leg and foot, they don several pairs of thick woollen stockings. They say they seldom suffer from cold feet. I, who have spent so many enjoyable days among them, give credence to that statement. A completelyequipped fowler, I have noticed, wears a smock over a jacket, hiding a waistcoat under which nestles a thick blue jersey, completely keeping the cold air from an impenetrable shirt, which in turn must smother the vest which I believe lies next to his skin. It is easily to be credited that if he moved about occasionally he would not be likely to succumb to the refrigerating effects of a British winter!

Duck-stalking forms, with the majority of the fowlers, an attribute of other operations for the slaughter of wild birds; for be it known that wild duck do not make their way into the fens in anything like so large numbers as in the earlier generations, when the district was more "fenny" in the true meaning of the term. Green plover or lapwing decoying seems to be the staple calling of these men at this period, but I intend to deal almost exclusively with the operation of duck-stalking, as being far more interesting to the general reader.

The operators generally work together in pairs, partly for company, as the monotony during "slack times" in the midst of a dreary waste is almost unbearable, and partly because, if during the operations of plover decoying a quantity of wild duck

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make their appearance, one man can stalk after them and leave his mate to look after the pee-wit industry. If, however, there be a large number of birds, both leave the plovers to their own devices and set off in their boats for a "stalk."

As the first illustration will show, the district in which these operations are carried out is by no means void of charm. The neighbourhood has a weird kind of beauty which grows upon one more and more. When the waters are not too high, the broken top of a "cradge" bank, or a "sock" or "soak" dyke, has a silent charm of its own. A group of slender, graceful willows breaks the horizon in this direction. A windmill disperses what might, perhaps, be regarded as monotony in another. The quiet, unobtrusive little village of Cowbit to the east furnishes a charming vision, with its whitewashed, spick-and-span houses, thatched roofs, and pleasant high hedges and trees; whilst the quaint old church, with solemn, square buttressed tower with clock always pointing at 4.5 p.m., or a.m., I am not quite sure which, stands sentinel over miles and miles of fen. But I must not become too enthusiastic over what only too many people, I fear, regard as a swampy, desolate, rheumatic-engendering, ague-enticing "Slough of Despond." That is an impression which should, however, be corrected, for statistics of the present day show that the fenny districts of South Lincolnshire produce as many octogenarians as any other part of the country, and rheumatism comes rarely into the category of a Lincolnshire doctor.

Having described to some extent the personal equipment of the human subjects of the illustrations, a word had better be interposed with relation to their stock-in-trade, which is wholly contained in their light boats, or shouts, as they are called, a good idea of which can be gathered from the photographs. These shouts are specially adapted to the shallow water they have to navigate. They are flat-bottomed and few of them draw more than four inches of water. Fifteen feet is an average length, and three and a half feet the usual extreme breadth. These are, subject to the skilful manipulation of the gunners, practically navigable to a hair's-breadth. They are so light as to be easily pulled over a protruding bank or other impediment to natural progress. They are propelled under ordinary circumstances as shown in the illustration on opposite page. The gunners stand firmly—looking carefully after the centre of gravity—in the broader end of the boat, and push themselves along by "sprits" with iron-pronged lower ends. These thirteen feet long poles, to the ordinary individual, are very clumsy, but to the gunner are no more so than a knife or fork. The armament of the shouts—for aggressive, not defensive purposes—consists, in nearly every instance, of a heavy, unwieldy duck-gun weighing about

CREEPING NEARER.

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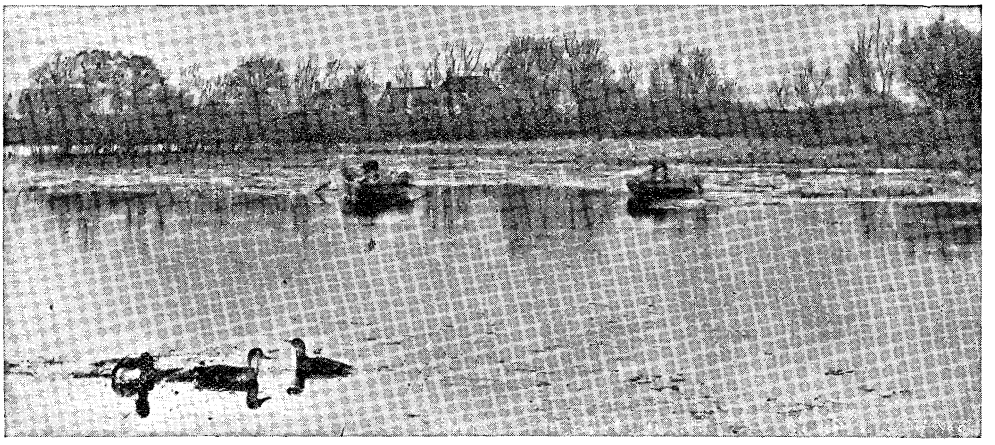

TAKING AIM.

three and a half cwts., which reposes centre-wise down the boat, the muzzle protruding over the bow end as shown, and an ordinary double-barrelled breechloading hand gun. The muzzle-loader is a formidable looking firearm, and generally primitive, though even in some instances interesting from an anti-quarian point of view, as many an one is discharged by the old flint and lock arrange-ment. The barrels run about eight feet long, with a two-inch bore, and discharge about three-quarters of a pound of shot at each explosion through the agency of about three-quarters of an ounce of gunpowder.

If the fowlers see a quantity of duck or any of their species which come under the name of half-birds as opposed to full-birds, they instantly hide themselves, and very quietly watch the birds' antics. The men are continually scanning the horizon, and it is remarkable at what an apparently, to the inexperienced eye, impossible distance these fenmen can recognise the advent of birds, and at what range they can distinguish the variety, whether full-birds, mallard, teal, "shovellers," widgeon, or what not. A careful watch is kept, however, to see where the birds alight, and on a favourable day they

RAKING IN THE SPOIL.

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may be observed to drop into the water with a splash even at a distance of a mile and a half. The men now hold a short council as to whether they had better cut down the "cradge" and round by the osier beds, or under the shade of Tointon's willows, and so get within range. A satisfactory course of action being decided upon, off they start, without any outward exhibition of the internal satisfaction and excitement which one would think must be consuming them. They start at a brisk pace, standing in their respective shouts, and punting away as though they were simply going home to dinner, rather hungry. When they get within about half a mile of the birds they adopt more cautious means of progress. Each now lays his sprit in the boat, and kneels, as illustrated by the crouching fenman in the photograph on page 25. They propel themselves in this position with two "stalking sticks," about three feet in length, one in either hand—a very comfortable mode of progression when the water is shallow. Creeping closer still, however, to the unsuspecting ducks, the gunners deem it advisable to use still greater caution and to show no more of their anatomy over the boat hull than is absolutely necessary by lying down at full length, an operation which there is just room to accomplish with a moderate degree of comfort.

A GOOD HAUL.

The men have now separated, and each makes straight for the ducks in a direction as from the extremities of the base of a triangle to the apex, at which point are situated their intended victims. Each gunner glances down the long barrel of his heavy piece of armament, still propelling himself noiselessly and as imperceptibly as possible. When within a hundred and fifty yards the nerve tension must be extreme, for the fowler recognises that he has only to go seventy yards further before he can fire with almost "dead" certainty! Onwards they move, so slowly that from a distance the motion is imperceptible. They are within a hundred yards. Still the birds are innocently feeding and squabbling amongst themselves for the daintier morsels of food; there cannot be less than forty of them. The gunners, as though there were absolute brain contact between them, wait, although they have got within range, for the precise moment when the ducks are as close together as it is probable they will crowd. The guns are trained to the desired elevation without a rustle. The stalking-sticks are silently let drift away. The final touch is given to the trim of the guns, and at a silent, recognised signal both guns speak out almost as one.

Not a moment is lost. Both men rise instantly with their hand guns at shoulder, and bring down, before escape is possible, those birds which have just been touched and whose flight has been slightly impaired. Seldom is a cartridge wasted, for these men are splendid marksmen and rarely err. Then the stalking-sticks are regained and the spoil gathered up, carefully shaken free of water, loose feathers smoothed, and the birds placed in the boat. Twenty-three full birds are to-day the result—an exceptionally successful stalk. Thirteen were killed outright, seven totally disabled, and the remaining three accounted for by the four cartridges from the double-barrelled breechloaders.

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STALKY & CO.

By Rudyard Kipling.*

Illustrated by L. Raven Hill.

No. I.—"STALKY."

How they have taken Kinmont Willie
Against the peace of the border tide,
And they've forgot that the bauld Buccleuch
Was keeper here on the Scottish side.
—*Kinmont Willie.*

"AND then De Vitré said we were beastly funks not to help, and I said there were too many chaps in it to suit us. Besides, there's bound to be a mess somewhere or other with old De Vitré in charge. Wasn't I right?"

"Quite. And, anyhow, it's a silly biznai, bung through. What'll they do with the beastly cows when they've got 'em? You can milk a cow—if she'll stand still. That's all right, but——"

"You're a pig, Beetle."

"No, I ain't. What's the sense of drivin' a lot of cows up from the Burrows to—to—where is it?"

"They're tryin' to drive 'em to Toowey's farmyard at the top of the hill—the empty one, where we smoked last Tuesday. It's a revenge. Vidley chivied De Vitré twice last week for ridin' his ponies on the Burrows; and De Vitré's goin' to lift as many of old Vidley's cattle as he can and plant 'em up the hill. He'll muck it, though—with Parsons, Orrin and Howlett helpin'. They'll only yell, an' shout, an' bunk if they see Vidley."

"We might have managed it," said McTurk slowly, turning up his coat-collar against the rain that swept over the Burrows. His hair was of the dark mahogany red that goes with a certain temperament.

"We should," Corkran replied with equal confidence. "But they've gone into it as if it was a sort of spidger-hunt. I've never done any cattle liftin', but it seems to me-e-e that one might just as well be stalky about a thing as not."

The smoking vapours of the Atlantic drove low in pearly grey wreaths above the boys' heads. Out of the mist to windward, beyond the grey loom of the Pebble Ridge, came the unceasing roar of the sea rising and falling in mile-long rollers. To leeward a few stray ponies and cattle, the property of the Northam potwallopers, and the playthings of the boys in their leisure hours, showed through the haze. Beyond—blotted out—lay Appledore and the flats of her Pool, where the Taw and the Torridge join. They halted by the Cattle-gate which marks the limit of cultivation, where the fields come down to the Burrows from Northam Hill. Beetle, shock-headed and spectacled, drew his nose pensively to and fro along the wet top-bar; McTurk shifted from one foot to the other, watching the water drain into either print; while Corkran whistled through his teeth as he leaned against the sod-bank, peering into the mist.

A grown or sane person might have called the weather vile; but the boys of the College had not yet learned the national interest in climate. It was a little damp, to be sure; but it was always damp in the Easter term, and—this was an article of faith—sea-wet could not give one a cold under any circumstances. Macintoshes were excellent things to go to church in, but crippling if one had to run at short notice across heavy country. So they waited serenely in the downpour, clad as their mothers would not have cared to see.

"I say, Corky," said Beetle, wiping his spectacles for the twentieth time, "if we aren't going to help De Vitré, what are we here for?"

"We're goin' to watch, of course. Keep your eye on your Uncle and he'll pull you through."

"It's an awful biznai, driving cattle—in open country," said McTurk, who, as the son of an Irish baronet, knew something of these operations. "They'll have to run half over the Burrows after 'em. S'pose they're ridin' Vidley's ponies?"

"De Vitré's sure to be. He's a dab on a horse. Listen! What a filthy row they're making. They'll be heard for miles."

The thick air filled with whoops and shouts, cries, words of command, the rattle of broken golf-clubs, and a clatter of hoofs. Three cows with their calves came up to the Cattle-gate at an indignant milch-canter, followed by four wild-eyed bullocks and two rough-coated ponies. A fat and freckled

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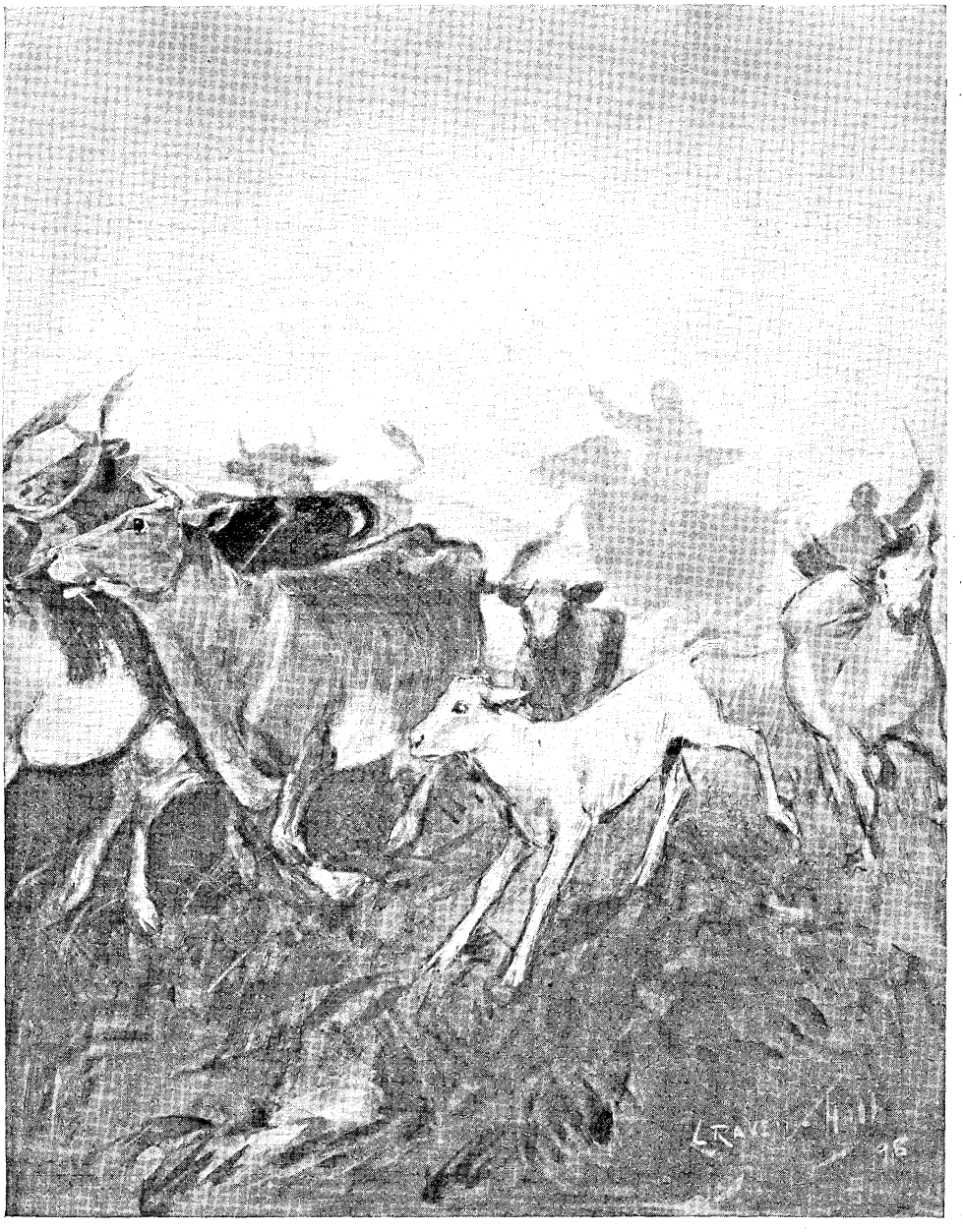
youth of fifteen trotted behind them, riding bare-backed and brandishing a hedge-stake. De Vitré up to a certain point was an inventive youth, with a passion for horse-exercise that the Northam commoners did not encourage. Vidley, who could not understand that a grazing pony likes being galloped, had once called him a thief, and the insult rankled. Hence the raid.

"Come on," he cried over his shoulder.



"The thick air filled with whoops and shouts . . . and a clatter of hoofs."

"Open the gate, Corkran, or they'll all cut back again. We've had no end of bother to get 'em. Oh, won't old Vidley be wild!"

Three boys on foot ran up, "shooing" the

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cattle in excited amateur fashion, till they headed into the narrow, high-banked Devonshire lane that ran uphill.

"Come on, Corkran. It's no end of a lark," pleaded De Vitré; but Corkran shook his head. The raid had been presented to him after dinner that day as a completed scheme, in which he might, by favour, play a minor part; and Arthur Lane Corkran, No. 104, did not care for lieutenancies.

"You'll be collared," he cried, as he shut the gate. "Parsons and Orrin are no good in a row. You'll be collared sure as a gun, De Vitré."

"Oh, you're a beastly funk!" The speaker was already hidden by the mist.

"Hang it all," said McTurk. "It's about the first time we've ever had a cattle-lift at the Coll. Let's——"

"Not much," said Corkran firmly; "keep your eye on your Uncle." His word was law in matters like these. Experience had taught them that if they manœuvred without Corkran they fell into trouble.

"You're wrathy because you didn't think of it first," said Beetle; and Corkran kicked him thrice slowly, neither he nor Beetle changing a muscle the while.

"No, I ain't; but it isn't stalky enough for me."

"Stalky," in the school vocabulary, meant clever, well-considered, and wily, as applied to a plan of action; and stalkiness was the one virtue Corkran toiled after.

"Same thing," said McTurk. "You think you're the only stalky chap in the Coll."

Corkran kicked him as he had kicked Beetle; and, even as Beetle, McTurk took not the faintest notice. By the etiquette of their three-year-old friendship, this was no more than formal notice of dissent from a proposition.

"They haven't thrown out any pickets" (that school prepared boys for the Army). "They ought to do that—even for apples. Toowey's farmyard may be full of people."

"'Twasn't last week," said Beetle, "when we smoked in that cartshed place. It's a mile from any house."

Up went one of Corkran's light eyebrows. "Oh, Beetle, I *am* so tired o' kickin' you! Does that mean it's empty now? They ought to have sent one fellow ahead to look. They're simply bound to be collared. An' where'll they bunk to if they have to run for it? Parsons has only been here two terms. *He* don't know the lie of the country. Orrin's a fat ass, an' Howlett bunks from a guv'nor" (vernacular for a native of Devon engaged in agricultural pursuits) "as far as he can see one. De Vitré's the only decent chap in the lot, an'—an' I put him up to tryin' Toowey's farmyard."

"Well, keep your hair on," said Beetle. "What are we going to do? It's hefty damp here."

"Let's think a bit." Corkran whistled between his teeth and presently broke into a swift, short double-shuffle. "We'll go straight up an' see what happens to 'em. Cut across the fields; an' we'll lie up in the hedge where the lane comes in by the barn—where we found the dead hedgehog last term. Come on!"

He scrambled over the earth bank and dropped with a flop on the rain-soaked plough. It was a deep slope to the brow of the hill where Toowey's out-barns stood. The boys took no account of stiles or footpaths, crossing field after field diagonally, and where they found a hedge, bursting through it like beagles. The lane lay on their right flank, and they heard much lowing and shouting from that direction.

"Well, if he isn't collared," said McTurk, kicking off a few pounds of loam against a gate-post, "he jolly well ought to be."

"We'll be collared, too, if you go with your nose up like that. Duck, you ass, and come along under the hedge. We can get quite close up to the barn," said Corkran. "There's no sense in not doin' a thing stalkily while you're about it."

They wriggled into the top of an old hollow double hedge less than thirty yards from the big black timbered barn with its square of out-buildings. Their ten minutes' climb had lifted them a couple of hundred feet above the Burrows. As the mists parted here and there, they could see the great triangle of sodden green, tipped with yellow sand-dunes and fringed with three miles of white foam, laid out like a blurred map below. The steady thunder of the surge along the Pebble Ridge made a background to the wild noises in the lane.

"What did I tell you?" said Corkran, peering through the dripping stems of quickset which commanded a view of the farmyard. "Three farm-chaps—getting out dung—with pitchforks. It's too late to head off De Vitré. We'd be collared if we showed up. Besides, they've heard 'em. They couldn't help hearing. What asses!"

The natives, brandishing their weapons, talked together, using many times the word "Colleger." As the tumult swelled, they

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"They wriggled into the top of an old hollow double hedge."

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disappeared into various pens and byres. The first of the cattle trotted up to the yard-gate, and De Vitré felicitated his band.

"That's all right," he shouted. "Oh, won't old Vidley be wild! Open the gate, Orrin, an' whack 'em through. They're pretty warm."

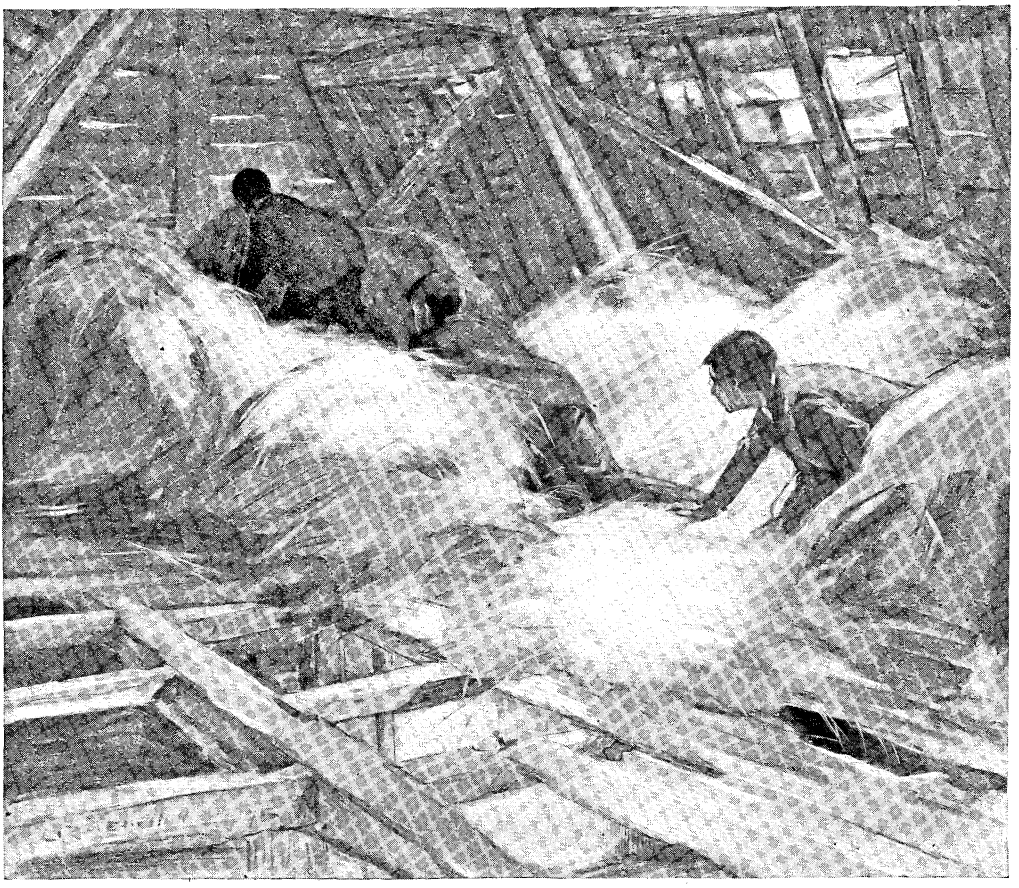
"So'll you be in a minute," muttered McTurk. The raiders hurried into the yard behind the cattle. They heard a shout of triumph, shrill yells of despair; saw one

"Found 'em! They bullocks drove like that—all heavin' an' penkin' an' hotted. Oh, 'tes shaamful. Yeou've nigh to killed the cows—lat alone stealin' 'em. They sends pore boys to jail for half o' this."

"That's a lie," said Beetle to McTurk, turning on the wet grass.

"I know; but they always say it. 'Member when they collared us at the Monkey Farm that Sunday, with the apples in your topper?"

"My Aunt! They're goin' to lock 'em up



"They wriggled into the hay and crawled to the edge of the loft."

Devonian guarding the gate with a pitchfork, while the others, alas! captured all four boys.

"Of all the infernal, idiotic, lower-second asses!" said Corkran. "They haven't even taken off their house caps."

"Aie! Yeou young rascals. We've got 'e! Whutt be doin' to Muster Vidley's bullocks?"

"Oh, we found 'em," said De Vitré, who bore himself well in defeat. "Would you like 'em?"

an' send for Vidley," Corkran whispered, as one of the captors hurried downhill in the direction of Appledore, and the prisoners were led into the barn.

"But they haven't taken their names and numbers, anyhow," said Corkran, who had fallen into the hands of the enemy more than once.

"But they're bottled! Rather sickly for De Vitré," said Beetle. "It's one lickin' anyhow, even if Vidley don't hammer him.

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The Head's pretty wild about gate-liftin', an' poachin', an' all that sort of thing. He won't care for cattle-liftin' much."

"It's awfully bad for cows, too, to run 'em about in milk," said McTurk, lifting one knee from a sodden primrose-tuft. "What's the next move, Corky?"

"We'll get into the old cartshed where we smoked. It's next to the barn. We can cut across while they're inside and get in through the window."

"S'pose we're collared?" said Beetle, cramming his red and black house-cap into his pocket. One does not attack under house-colours.

"That's just it. They'd never dream of any more chaps walkin' bung into the trap. Besides, we can get out through the roof if they spot us. Keep your eye on your Uncle. Come on."

A swift dash carried them to a huge clump of nettles, beneath the unglazed back window of the cartshed. Its open front, of course, gave on to the barnyard.

They scrambled through, dropped among the carts, and climbed up into the rudely-boarded upper floor that they had discovered a week ago when in search of retirement. It covered a half of the building and ended in darkness at the barn wall. The roof-tiles were broken and displaced. Through the chinks they commanded a clear view of the yard, half filled with disconsolate cattle, steaming sadly in the rain.

"You see," said Corkran, always careful to secure an open line of retreat, "if they bottle us up here, we'll squeeze out between these rafters, slide down the roof, an' bunk. They couldn't even get out through the window. They'd have to run right round the barn. Now are you satisfied, you burbler?"

"Huh! You only said that to make quite sure yourself," Beetle retorted.

"If the boards weren't all loose, I'd kick you," growled Corkran. "What's the sense of gettin' into a place if you can't get out of it? Shut up and listen."

A confused murmur of voices reached them from the end of the attic. McTurk tip-toed thither with caution.

"Hi! It leads through. At least you can get through. Come along!" He fingered the boarded wall.

"What's the other side?" said Corkran the cautious.

"Hay, you idiot." They heard his boot-heels grating on wood, and he had gone.

At some time or other sheep must have been folded in the cartshed, and an inventive farm hand, sooner than take the hay round, had displaced a board in the barn side to thrust fodder through. It was in no sense a lawful path, but twelve inches in the square is all that any boy needs.

"Look here!" said Beetle, as they waited McTurk's return. "The cattle are comin' in out of the wet."

A brown, hairy back showed some three feet below the half-floor, as one by one the cattle shouldered in for shelter among the carts, filling the shed with their sweet breath.

"That blocks our way out, unless we get out by the roof, an' that's rather too much of a drop, unless we have to," said Corkran. "They're all bung in front of the window, too. What a day we're havin'!"

"Corkran! Beetle!" McTurk's whisper shook with delight. "You can see 'em; I've seen 'em. They're in a blue funk in the barn, an' the two clods are makin' fun of 'em—horrid. Orrin's tryin' to bribe 'em, an' Parsons is nearly blubbin'. Come an' look! I'm in the hayloft. Get through the hole. Don't make a noise, Beetle."

Lithely they wriggled between the displaced boards into the hay and crawled to the edge of the loft. Three years' skirmishing against a hard and unsympathetic peasantry had taught them the elements of strategy. For tactics they looked to Corkran; but even Beetle, notoriously absent-minded, held a lock of hay before his head. There was no haste, no betraying giggle, no squeak of excitement. They had learned, by stripes, the unwisdom of these things. But the conference by a root-cutter on the barn floor was deep in its own affairs; De Vitré's party promising, entreating, and cajoling, while the natives laughed.

"Wait till Muster Vidley an' Muster Toowey—yis, an' the policemen come," was the only answer. "'Tis about time to go to milkin'. What 'ull us do?"

"Yeou go milk, Tom, an' I'll stay long o' the young gentlemen," said the bigger of the two, who answered to the name of Abraham. "Muster Toowey, he'm laike to charge yeou for usin' his yard so free. Iss fai! Yeou'll be wopped proper. 'Rackon yeou'll be askin' for junkets to set in this week o' Sundays to come. But Muster Vidley, he'll give 'ee the best leatherin' of all. He'm passionful, I tal 'ee."

Tom stumped out to milk. The barn doors closed behind him, and in the fading light a great gloom fell on all but Abraham, who discoursed eloquently on Mr. Vidley, his temper and attributes.

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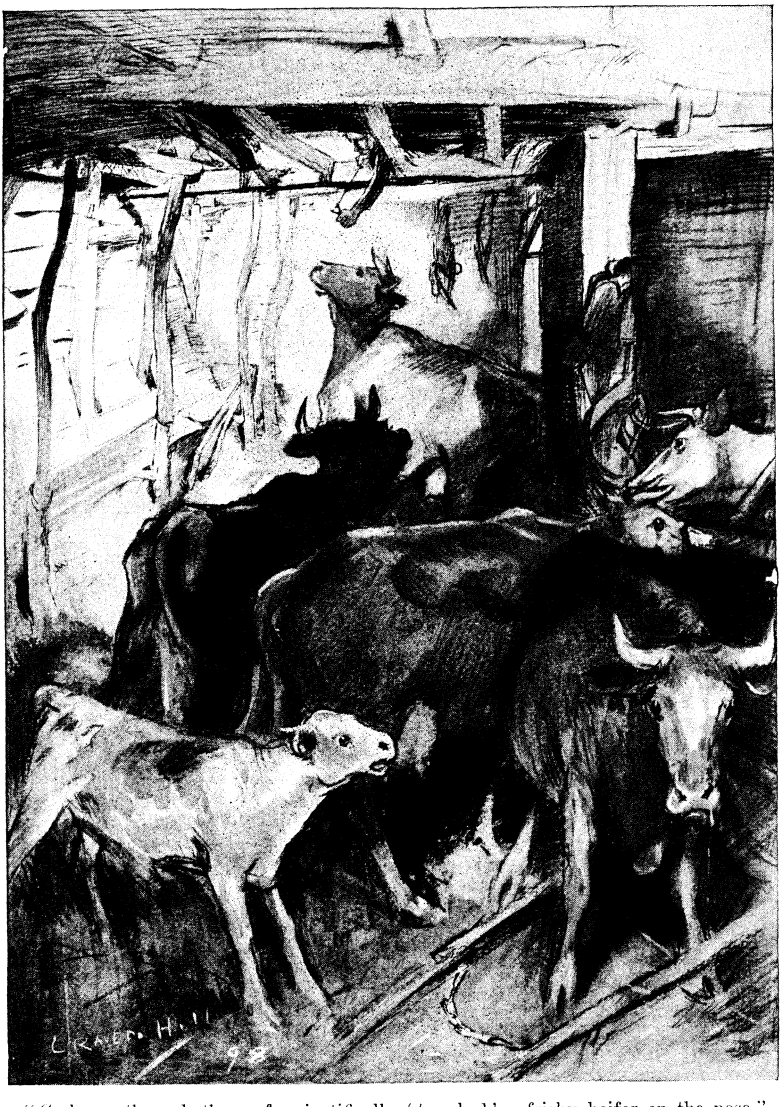
Corkran turned in the hay and retreated to the attic, followed by his army.

"No good," was his verdict. "I'm afraid it's all up with 'em. We'd better get out."

"Yes, but look at these beastly cows," said McTurk, spitting on to a heifer's back. "It'll take us a week to shove 'em away from the window; and that brute Tom'll hear us. He's just across the yard, milkin'."



"Corkran, through the roof, scientifically 'tweaked' a frisky heifer on the nose."

"Tweak 'em, then," said Corkran. "Hang it, I'm sorry to have to go, though. If we could get that other beast out of the barn for a minute we might make a rescue. Well, it's no good."

He drew forth a long, lean, well-worn, home-made catapult—the "tweaker" of those days—slipped a buckshot into the supple chamois leather pouch, and pulled to the full stretch of the elastic. The others followed his example. They only wished to get the cattle out of their way, but seeing the backs so near, they deemed it their duty each to choose his bird and to let fly with all their strength.

They were not in the least prepared for what followed. Three bullocks, smitten as they believed by Io's gadfly, trying to wheel amid six close-pressed companions, not to mention three calves, several carts, and all the lumber of a general-utility shed, do not turn end for end without confusion. It was lucky for the boys that they stood a little back on the floor, because one horned head, tossed in pain, flung up a loose board at the edge, and it came down lance-wise on an amazed back. Another victim floundered bodily across the shafts of a decrepit gig, smashing these and oversetting the wheels. That was more than enough for the nerves of the assembly. With wild bellowings and a good deal of left-and-right butting they dashed into the barnyard, tails on end, and began a very fine free fight on the midden. The last cow out hooked down an old set of harness, which flapped over one eye and trailed behind her. When a companion trod on it, which happened every few seconds, she naturally fell on her knees; and, being

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a Burrows cow, with the interests of her calf at heart, attacked the first passer-by. Half awed, but wholly delighted, the boys watched the outburst. It was in full flower before they even dreamed of a second shot. Tom came out from a byre with a pitchfork, to be chased in again by the harnessed cow. A bullock floundered on the muck-heap, fell, rose and bedded himself to the belly, helpless, astare, and bellowing. The others took great interest in him.

Corkran, through the roof, scientifically "tweaked" a frisky heifer on the nose, and it is no exaggeration to say that she danced on her hind legs for half a minute.

"Abram! Oh, Abram! They'm bewitched. They'm ragin'. 'Tes the milk fever. They've been drove mad. Oh, Abram! They'll horn the bullock! They'll horn *me!* Abram!"

"Bide till I lock the door," quoth Abraham, faithful to his trust. They heard him padlock the barn-door; saw him come out with yet another pitchfork. A bullock lowered his head, Abraham ran to the nearest pig-pen, where unearthly squeakings told that he had disturbed the peace of a large family.

"Beetle," snapped Corkran. "Go in an' get 'em out. Quick! We'll keep the cows happy."

A people sitting in darkness and the shadow of a monumental licking, too depressed to be angry with De Vitré, heard a voice from on high saying, "Come up here! Come on! Come up! There's a way out."

They shinned up the loft-stanchions without a word; found a boot-heel which they were *bidden* to take for guide, and squeezed desperately through a hole in darkness, to be hauled out by Corkran.

"Have you got your caps? Did you give 'em your names and numbers?"

"Yes. No."

"That's all right. Drop down here. Don't stop to jaw. Over the cart—through that window, and bunk! Get *out!*"

De Vitré needed no second word. They heard him squeak as he dropped among the nettles, and through the roof-chinks they watched four slight figures disappear into the rain. Tom and Abraham, from byre and pig-pen, exhorted the cattle to keep quiet.

"By gum!" said Beetle; "that *was* stalky. How did you think of it?"

"It was the only thing to do. Anybody could have seen that."

"Hadn't we better bunk, too, now?" said McTurk uneasily.

"Why? We're all right. *We* haven't done anything. I want to hear what old Vidley will say. Stop tweakin', Turkey. Let 'em cool off. Golly! how that heifer

"The last cow out hooked down an old set of harness, which flapped over one eye and trailed behind her."

danced! I swear I didn't know cows could be so lively. We're only just in time."

"My Hat! Here's Vidley—and Toowey," said Beetle, as two farmers, both with sticks, strode into the yard.

"Gloats! oh, gloats! Fids! oh, fids! Hefty fids and gloats to us!" said Corkran.

These words, in their vocabulary, expressed the supreme of delight. "Gloats" implies more or less of personal triumph, "fids" is felicity in the abstract, and the boys were tasting both that day. Last joy of all, they had the pleasure of Mr. Vidley's acquaintance, albeit he did not love them. Toowey was more of a stranger, his orchards lying overnear the public road.

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Tom and Abraham together told a tale of stolen cattle maddened by overdriving, of cows sure to die in calving, and of milk that would never return, that made Mr. Vidley swear for three consecutive minutes in the soft speech of North Devon.

"'Tes tu bad. 'Tes tu bad," said Toowey, consolingly; "let' 'ope they 'aven't took no great' arm. They be wonderful wild, though."

"'Tes all well for yeou, Toowey, that sells them dom Collegers seventy quart a week."

"Eighty," Toowey replied, with the meek triumph of one who has underbidden his neighbour on tender; "but that's no odds to me. Yeou'm free to leather 'em saame as if they was yeour own sons. On my barn-floor shall 'ee leather 'em."

"Generous old pig!" said Beetle; "De Vitré ought to have stayed for this."

"They'm all safe an' to rights," said the officious Abraham, producing the key. "Rackon us'll come in an' hold 'em for yeou. Hey! the cows are fair ragin' still. Us'll have to run for it."

The barn being next to the shed, the boys could not see that stately entry. But they heard.

"Gone an' hided in the hay. Aie! They'm proper afraid."

"Rout un out! Rout un out!" roared Vidley, rattling a stick impatiently on the root-cutter.

"Oh, my Aunt!" said Corkran, standing on one foot.

"Shut the door. Shut the door, I tal 'ee. Rackon us can find un in the dark. Us don't want un boltin' like rabbitses under our elbows." The big barn-door closed with a clang.

"My Gum!" said Corkran, which was always his oath in time of action. He dropped down and was gone for perhaps ten seconds.

"And that's all right," he said, returning at a gentle pace.

"Hwhatt?" McTurk almost shrieked, for Corkran, in the shed below, waved a large key.

"Stalks! Frabjous stalks! Bottled 'em! all four!" was the reply, and Beetle fell on his bosom. "Yiss. They'm so's to say, like, locked up. If you're goin' to laugh, Beetle, I shall have to kick you."

"But I must!" Beetle was purple with suppressed mirth.

"You won't do it here, then!" He thrust the already limp Beetle through the cart-shed window. It sobered him, for one cannot laugh on a bed of nettles. Then Corkran stepped on his prostrate carcass, and McTurk followed, just as Beetle would have risen; so he was upset, and the nettles painted on his cheek with a likeness of hideous eruptions.

"Thought that 'ud cure you," said Corkran, with a sniff.

Beetle rubbed his face desperately with dock-leaves, and said nothing. All desire to laugh had gone from him. They entered the lane.

Then a clamour broke out from the barn—a compound noise of horse-like kicks, shaking of door-panels, and fivefold yells.

"They've found it out," said Corkran. "How strange!" He sniffed again.

"Let 'em," said Beetle. "No one can hear 'em. Come on up to Coll."

"What a brute you are, Beetle! You only think of your beastly self. Those cows want milkin'. Poor dears! Hear 'em low," said McTurk.

"Go back and milk 'em yourself, then." Beetle danced with pain. "We shall miss call-over, hanging' about like this; an' I've two black marks this week already."

"Then you'll have fatigue-drill on Monday, sure pop," said Corkran. "Come to think of it, I've got two black marks *aussi*. Hm! This is serious. This is hefty serious."

"I told you," said Beetle, with vindictive triumph. "An' we want to go out after that hawk's nest on Monday. We shall be swottin' dumb-bells, though. *All* your fault. If we'd bunked with De Vitré at first——"

Corkran paused between the hedgerows. "Hold on a shake an' don't burble. Keep your eye on your Uncle. Do you know, I believe someone's shut up in that barn. I think we ought to go and see."

"Don't be a giddy idiot. Come on up to Coll." But Corkran took no notice of Beetle.

He retraced his steps to the head of the lane, and, lifting up his voice, cried as in bewilderment, "Hullo? Who's there? What's that row about? Who are you?"

"Oh, Peter!" said Beetle, skipping, and forgetting his anguish in this new and jestful development.

"Hoi! Hoi! 'Ere! Let us out!" The answers came muffled and hollow from the black bulk of the barn, with renewed thunders on the door.

"Now play up," said Corkran. "Turkey, you keep the cows merry. 'Member that

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we've just discovered 'em. *We* don't know anything. Be polite."

They picked their way over the muck and held speech through the crack by the hinge. Three more genuinely surprised boys the North Devon rain never fell upon. And

"Abraham ran to the nearest pig-pen."

they were so polite—so polite and so difficult to enlighten. They had to be told again and again.

"We've been 'ere for hours an' hours." That was Toowey. "An' the cows to milk, an' all." That was Vidley. "The door she blewed against us an' jammed herself." That was Abraham.

"Yes, we can see that. It's quite jammed this side," said Corkran. "How careless you chaps are!"

"Oppen un. Oppen un. Bash her oppen with a rock, young gen'elmen! The cows are milk-heated an' raagin'. Haven't yeou boys no sense?"

Seeing that McTurk from time to time tweaked the wretched cattle into renewed bellowings and caperings, it was quite pos-

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sible that the boys had some knowledge of a sort. But Mr. Vidley was rude. They told him so through the door, professing only now to recognise his voice.

"Humour un if 'e can. I paid seven-an'-six for the dom padlock," said Toowey. "Niver mind *him*. 'Tes only old Vidley."

"Be yeou gwaine to stay a prisoneer an' captive for the sake of a lock, Toowey? I'm 'shaamed of 'ee. Rowt un oppen, young gen'elmen! 'Twas a God's own mercy yeou heard us. Toowey, yeou'm a borned miser."

"It'll be a long job," said Corkran. "Look here. It's near our call-over. If we stay to help you we'll miss it. We've come miles out of our way already—after you."

"Tell yeour master, then, what keeped 'ee—an arrand o' mercy, laike. I'll tal un tu when I bring the milk to-morrow," said Toowey.

"That's no good," said Corkran; "we may be caned twice over by then. You'll have to give us a letter." McTurk, backed against the barn-wall, was firing steadily and accurately into the brown of the herd.

"Yiss, yiss; come down to my house. My missus shall write 'ee a beauty, young gen'elmen. She makes out the bills. I'll give 'ee just such a letter o' racommendation as I'd give to my own son, if on'y yeou can humour the dom lock!"

"Niver mind the lock," Vidley wailed. "Let me get to my pore dommed cows, 'fore they'm dead."

They went to work with ostentatious rattlings and wrenchings, and a good deal of the by-play that Corkran always loved. At last—the noise of unlocking was covered by some fancy hammering with a young boulder—the door swung open and the captives marched out.

"Hurry up, Mister Toowey," said Corkran; "we ought to be getting back. Will you give us that note, please?"

"Some of yeou young gentlemen was drivin' my cattle off the Burrowses," said Vidley. "I give 'ee fair warnin', I'll tell yeour masters. I know *yeou!*" He glared at Corkran with malignant recognition.

McTurk looked him over from head to heel. "Oh, it's only old Vidley. Drunk again, I suppose. Well, we can't help that. Come on, *Mister* Toowey. We'll go to your house."

"Drunk, am I? I'll drink 'ee! How do I know yeou bain't same lot? Abram, did 'ee take their names an' numbers?"

"What *is* he ravin' about?" said Beetle. "My good fool, can't you see that if we'd taken your beastly cattle we shouldn't be hanging round your beastly barns. 'Pon my Sam, you guv'nors haven't any sense——"

"Let alone gratitude," said Corkran. "I suppose he *was* drunk, Mister Toowey; an' you locked him in the barn to get sober. Shockin'! Oh, shockin'!"

Vidley denied the charge in language that the boys' mothers would have wept to hear.

"Well, go and look after your cows, then," said McTurk. "Don't stand here cursin' us because we've been kind enough to help you out of a scrape. Why on earth weren't your cows milked before? *You're* no farmer. It's long past milkin'. No wonder they're half crazy. Disreputable old bog-trotter, you are. Brush your hair, sir . . . I beg your pardon, Mister Toowey. Hope we're not keeping you."

They left Vidley dancing on the muck-heap, amid the cows, and devoted themselves to propitiating Mr. Toowey on their way to his house. Exercise had made them hungry; hunger is the mother of good manners; and they won golden opinions from Mrs. Toowey.

* * * * *

"Three-quarters of an hour late for call-over, and fifteen minutes late for lock-up," said Foxy, the school sergeant, crisply. He was waiting for them at the head of the corridor. "Report to your housemaster, please—an' a nice mess you're in, young gentlemen."

"Quite right, Foxibus. Strict attention to dooty does it," said Corkran. "Now where, if we asked you, would you say that his honour Mister Prout might at this moment of time be found prouting—eh?"

"In 'is study—as usual, Mister Cockran. He took call-over."

"Hurrah! Luck's with us all the way. Don't blub, Foxy. I'm afraid you don't catch us this time."

* * * * *

"We went up to change, sir, before comin' to you. That made us a little late, sir. We weren't really very late. We were detained—by a——"

"An errand of mercy," said Beetle, and they laid Mrs. Toowey's laboriously written note before him. "We thought you'd prefer a letter, sir. He got himself locked into a barn, and we heard him shouting—Toowey who brings the Coll. milk—and we went to let him out."

"There were ever so many cows waiting

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to be milked," said McTurk; "and, of course, he couldn't get at them, sir. They said the door had jammed. There's the note, sir."

Mr. Prout read it over thrice. It was perfectly unimpeachable; but it said nothing of a large tea supplied by Mrs. Toowey.

"Well, I don't like your getting mixed up with farmers and potwallopers. Of course you will not have any more to do with the Tooweys."

"Of course not, sir. It was really on account of the cows, sir," said McTurk, glowing with philanthropy.

"And you came straight back?"

"We ran nearly all the way from the Cattle-gate," said Corkran, carefully developing the unessential. "That's a mile, sir. Of course, we had to get the note from Toowey first."

"But it was because we went to change—we were rather wet, sir—that we were really late. After we'd reported ourselves to the sergeant, sir, and he knew we were in Coll., we didn't like to come to your study all dirty." Sweeter than honey in the comb was the voice of Beetle.

"Very good. Don't let it happen again." Their housemaster learned to know them better in later years.

They entered—not to say swaggered—into Number Nine form-room, where De Vitré, Orrin, Parsons, and Howlett, before the fire, were still telling their adventures to admiring associates. They rose as one boy.

"What happened to *you?* We just saved call-over. Did you stay on? Tell us! Tell us!"

The three smiled pensively. They were not distinguished for telling more than was necessary.

"Oh, we stayed on a bit and then we came away," said McTurk. "That's all."

"You scab! You might tell a chap, anyhow."

"Think so? Well, that's awfully good of you, De Vitré. 'Pon my sainted Sam, that's awfully good of you," said Corkran, shouldering into the centre of the warmth and toasting one slippered foot before the blaze. "So you really think we might tell you?"

They stared at the coals and shook with deep, delicious chuckles.

"My Hat! We *were* stalky," said McTurk.

"Tom and Abraham together told a tale."

"I swear we were about as stalky as they make 'em. Weren't we?"

"It was a frabjous stalk," said Beetle. "Much too good to tell you brutes, though."

The form wriggled under the insult, but made no motion to avenge it. After all, on De Vitré's own showing, the three had saved the raiders from at least a public licking.

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"It wasn't half bad," said Corkran. "Stalky is the word."

"You were the really stalky one," said McTurk, one contemptuous shoulder turned to a listening world. "By Gum! you *were* stalky."

Corkran accepted the compliment and the name together. "Yes," said he; "keep your eye on your Uncle Stalky an' he'll pull you through."

"Well, you needn't gloat so," said De Vitré, viciously; "you look like a stuffed cat."

Corkran, henceforth known as Stalky, took not the faintest notice, but smiled dreamily.

"My Hat! Yes. Of course," he murmured. "Your Uncle Stalky—a doocid good name. Your Uncle Stalky is no end of a stalker. He's a great man. I swear he is. De Vitré, you're an ass—a putrid ass."

De Vitré would have denied this but for assenting murmurs from Parsons and Orrin.

"You needn't rub it in, then."

"But I do. I does. You are such a woppin' ass. D'you know it? Think over it a bit at prep. Think it up in bed. Just oblige me by thinkin' of it every half hour till further notice. Gummy! *What* an ass you are! But your Uncle Stalky"—he picked up the form-room poker and drove it thoughtfully against the mantelpiece—"is a great man!"

"Hear, hear," said Beetle and McTurk, who had fought under that general.

"Isn't your Uncle Stalky a great man, De Vitré? Speak the truth, you fat-headed old impostor."

"Yes," said De Vitré, deserted by his band. "I—I suppose he is."

"Mustn't suppose."

"Well, he is."

"A great man?"

"A great man. *Now* won't you tell us?" said De Vitré pleadingly.

"Not by a heap," said Stalky Corkran.

Therefore the tale has stayed untold till to-day.

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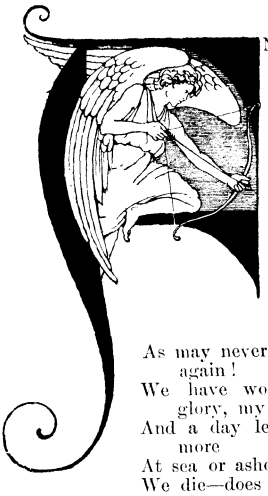
JACK'S FIGHTING COURAGE.*

By W. H. Fitchett,
Author of "Deeds that Won the Empire."

Illustrated by Henry Austin.



ND the sick men down in the hold, were most of them stark and cold;
And the pikes were all broken and bent, and the powder was all of it spent;
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,
"We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!
And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die—does it matter when?"—*Tennyson.*

THE annals of the sea are full of stories which set in vivid light the hardihood and daring of the average British sailor. But Jack's courage, it is to be noted, has a quality all its own. A strain of boyish simplicity and recklessness runs through it. It is of infinite readiness and resource; it depends little upon what may be called the artificialities of discipline, and much on generous comradeship, and on an almost childlike faith in the leadership of the officer. But there is found in a sailor's courage a strain of humour, of what the French call "*gaieté de cœur*," rarely discoverable in the sternly ordered ranks of a good regiment. This often gives an element of humour to the story of a sea-fight, and the boyish quality in a sailor's courage leads to feats being attempted and accomplished which a

"The gallant boy seized the Frenchmen's pistols and claimed them as his by right of conquest."

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wiser courage would have pronounced impossible in advance, and which, indeed, when told afterwards in cold blood, often strain the credulity of the listener to the breaking point.

Both of these qualities—the boyishness and the daring—are illustrated by an incident in the siege of Curaçao in 1804. The British ships had landed some 600 men and marines to assist in the siege, and one battery of 18-pounder carronades was manned by some seamen under Lieutenant Willoughby. The fighting was deadly, but not so deadly as the climate. Officers and men slept on the ground without tents; dysentery raged among them, and nearly a third of the force was in the hospital. Under these conditions Lieutenant Willoughby yet maintained the fire of his battery, repulsed a score of sorties, and toiled with splendid energy to keep up the spirits of his men, as well as to keep down those of the Dutch. As one method of doing this he adopted an extraordinary device. He had a chair and table placed upon the open breastwork of his little battery, and day after day, for more than three weeks, he sat in that exposed position, within easy range of the Dutch fort above. "The earth," says James, in his "Naval History," "was ploughed up all around; men were killed close to the spot, but still the table and the chair, and the daring young officer who sat there, remained untouched."

All this, of course, proves amazingly bad shooting on the part of the Dutch. Only once, indeed, did they succeed in hitting the chair, and then, as it happened, Willoughby was not in it. One afternoon a brother officer, Lieutenant Perrot, was visiting the battery, and laughingly undertook to take Willoughby's place in the chair for a shift. He sat down in the chair and leaned forward, with his arm upon his knee; scarcely had he done this when a shot from the Dutch fort carried off his arm, smashed the knee upon which the arm rested, and knocked the table to atoms. Poor Perrot was carried off, but Willoughby brought out another chair, placed it on exactly the same spot, calmly sat in it, and proceeded to work his battery from that point of vantage, the Dutch gunners toiling in vain to send in another successful shot! Willoughby justified his exploit by the argument that he wanted to keep up the spirits of his dysentery-wasted men by showing his contempt for Dutch shooting.

Some tales of Jack's fighting courage are almost of incredible quality. Campbell, in his "Naval History of Great Britain," tells the story of how the *Fame*, a Scottish merchant ship captured by a French privateer, was actually recaptured by the ship's boy, a Scottish lad thirteen years old. The privateer removed the crew of the captured vessel, except an old man and the boy, and put a prize crew of six Frenchmen on board, with orders to carry the ship to a French port. Wild weather came on from the south-east, and the *Fame* ran before the gale northward, till the Frenchmen lost all reckoning and were exhausted by the fury of the weather. But the boy stuck to the helm, and found out by the land that he was in the Firth of Forth. He ran the ship up the Forth, rounded under the lee of a British frigate at anchor there, and hailed her, announcing, in a manly voice, that he "had six French prisoners on board," and demanding a boat's crew to secure them! The boat came off, and as it touched the side of the *Fame* the gallant boy seized the Frenchmen's pistols and claimed them as his by right of conquest. Told in a sea-story this incident would seem extravagant, yet it was a bit of sober history.

It is prosaic history, again, the story of the sailor who, while half drunk, captured a strong fort in India with his own hand, and, on being rebuked afterwards for the irregularity, declared, "If I am flogged for this 'ere action, I will never take another fort by myself as long as I live!" The sailor's name was Strahan, he belonged to the *Kent*, forming part of Admiral Watson's fleet assisting Clive's operations on the Ganges in 1756. A party of sailors had been landed to assist Clive in storming what was called Bongee Fort. Strahan had received his afternoon's allowance of grog. He strayed, drawn by some martial impulse, or driven by the fumes of his grog, towards the breach, clambered up it, found sitting behind the bastion a cluster of turbaned heads, and leaped upon them with a shout, crying out, "The place is mine!" He was furiously attacked, his cutlass snapped; but two or three sailors, hearing their messmate's shouts, came tumbling up the breach to support him. The soldiers followed, without order or orders, and the fort, mounting eighteen heavy guns, was captured!

The Admiral summoned Strahan to his presence, and, with a stern face, inquired, "Strahan, what's this you have been doing?" The sailor gave an embarrassed hitch to his trousers, and said, "Why, to be sure, sir, it was I who took the fort; but I hope, your

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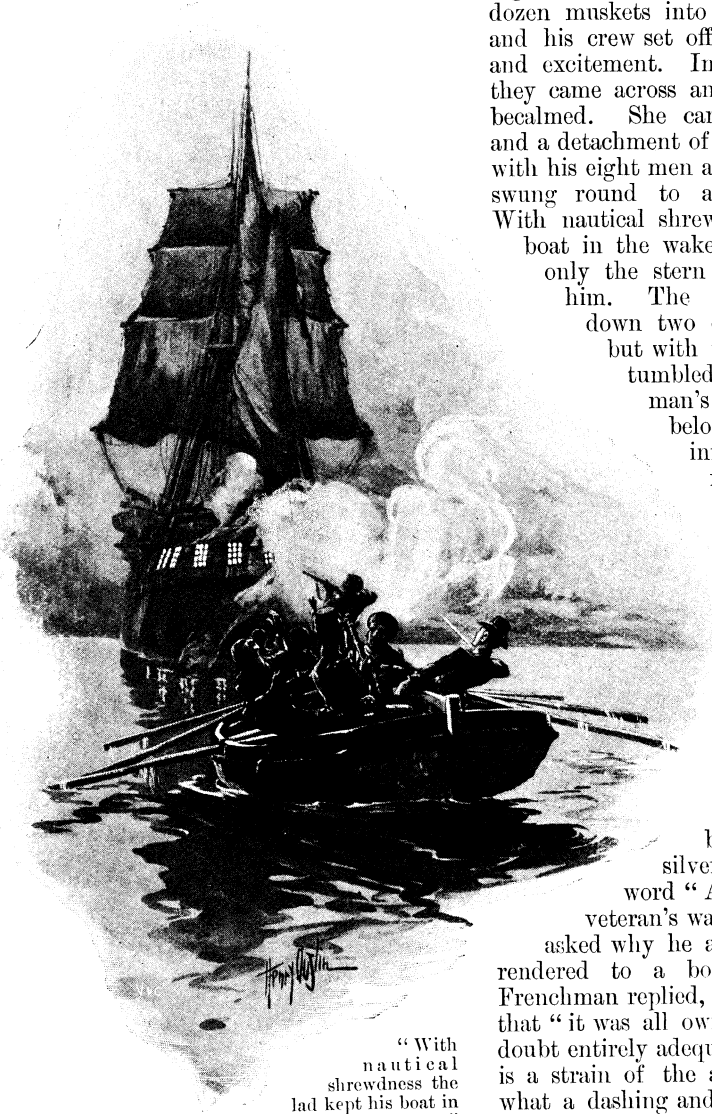
honour, as how there is no harm in it." Strahan explained afterwards, when invited to suggest his own reward, that his highest ambition was to be promoted to the position of ship's cook. The story is absurd, yet it is historic, and a touch of its characteristic quality is to be found in many naval incidents. And with gallant officers to lead, and men of Strahan's type to follow, the many dashing exploits of the British Navy become quite intelligible.



"With nautical shrewdness the lad kept his boat in the wake of the enemy."

In November, 1803, H.M.S. *Blanche*, cruising off St. Domingo, sent in its red cutter under the command of a middy named A'Court to collect sand for the use of the ship. The middy had for his crew one marine and seven seamen, and the captain of the *Blanche*, knowing the impish delight in wild adventure of his middies, forbade youngsters sent on trips of this kind to carry arms in the boat. The men, however, as eager for fun as the middy, smuggled half-a-dozen muskets into the boat, and A'Court and his crew set off in search of both sand and excitement. In the dusk of nightfall they came across an armed schooner lying becalmed. She carried half-a-dozen guns and a detachment of forty soldiers. A'Court, with his eight men and six muskets, at once swung round to attack the Frenchman. With nautical shrewdness the lad kept his boat in the wake of the enemy, so that only the stern guns could be fired at him. The French musketry shot down two of A'Court's tiny crew, but with the six survivors the lad tumbled up amongst the Frenchman's crew, drove them all below, the forty French infantry included, and carried off his prize in triumph to the *Blanche!* The detachment of French infantry was under the command of a colonel who had distinguished himself at Arcole, one of the most famous of Napoleon's Italian victories. His skull had been fractured in that battle, and a piece of silver plate, engraved with the word "Arcole," covered half the veteran's war-battered head. When asked why he and his detachment surrendered to a boy and six seamen, the Frenchman replied, with a shrug and a sigh, that "it was all owing to *mal de mer*," a no doubt entirely adequate explanation! There is a strain of the absurd in this story, yet what a dashing and heroic temper it argues in both officers and men!

A tale as extraordinary is that of the recapture of the *Windham*, mounting twenty-six guns, by two boats' crews of the *Sirius*, armed only with boat stretchers. The *Sirius* was cruising off Port Louis in 1810, and in the grey dawn of August 21 discovered a ship, apparently heavily armed, making for

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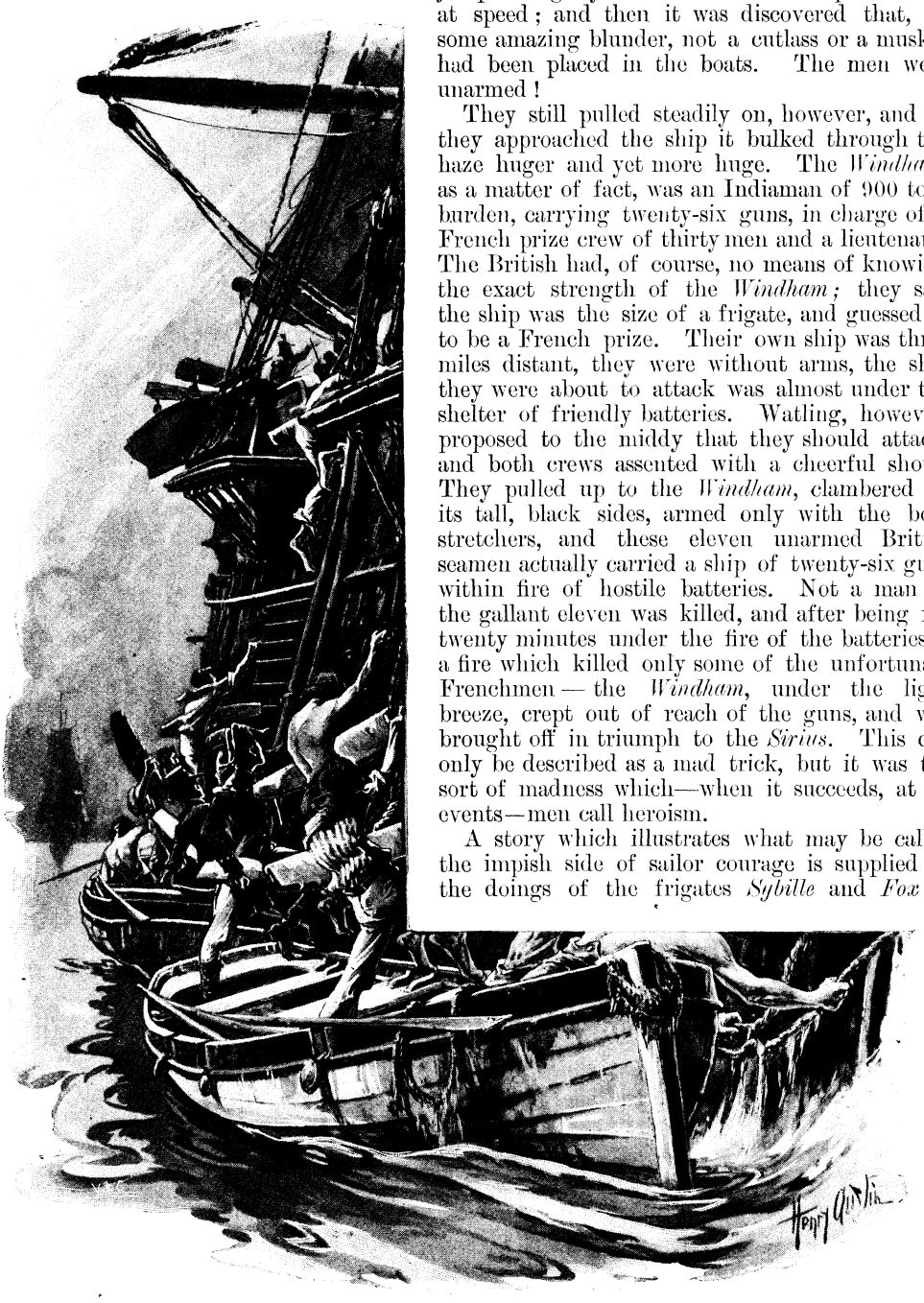
the strong batteries that guard the entrance to Riviere-Noire. The wind was light and off the land, and the *Sirius* had no chance of cutting off the enemy. In the uncertain haze of the morning the size of the ship and its armament could not be exactly made out, and Lieutenant Watling was sent off in the gig, with five seamen, followed by the jolly-boat, with a midshipman and four seamen, to carry the ship by boarding. The men jumped eagerly into the boats and pushed off at speed; and then it was discovered that, by some amazing blunder, not a cutlass or a musket had been placed in the boats. The men were unarmed!

They still pulled steadily on, however, and as they approached the ship it bulked through the haze huger and yet more huge. The *Windham*, as a matter of fact, was an Indiaman of 900 tons burden, carrying twenty-six guns, in charge of a French prize crew of thirty men and a lieutenant. The British had, of course, no means of knowing the exact strength of the *Windham;* they saw the ship was the size of a frigate, and guessed it to be a French prize. Their own ship was three miles distant, they were without arms, the ship they were about to attack was almost under the shelter of friendly batteries. Watling, however, proposed to the middy that they should attack, and both crews assented with a cheerful shout. They pulled up to the *Windham*, clambered up its tall, black sides, armed only with the boat stretchers, and these eleven unarmed British seamen actually carried a ship of twenty-six guns within fire of hostile batteries. Not a man of the gallant eleven was killed, and after being for twenty minutes under the fire of the batteries—a fire which killed only some of the unfortunate Frenchmen—the *Windham*, under the light breeze, crept out of reach of the guns, and was brought off in triumph to the *Sirius*. This can only be described as a mad trick, but it was the sort of madness which—when it succeeds, at all events—men call heroism.

A story which illustrates what may be called the impish side of sailor courage is supplied by the doings of the frigates *Sybille* and *Fox* at



"Clambered up its tall, black sides, armed only with the boat stretchers."

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Manila in 1798. Four Spanish line-of-battle ships and four frigates were lying in Manila Harbour, most of them in an unprepared state to put to sea, and expecting the arrival of a French squadron, under Admiral Sercey, to reinforce them. Cook, who commanded the *Sybille*, and Malcolm, the commander of the *Fox*, put their sailor heads together and determined to "trick the Spaniards." They gave their frigates as French a look as possible, hoisted a French flag, and sailed boldly into Manila, a hostile port, heavily armed, and with a squadron of line-of-battle ships lying in it! The two frigates worked coolly up the bay till nightfall, when they dropped anchor for the night, each ship keeping her topsails at the masthead ready for a hasty start. Early next morning they hoisted sail again, and in company with three Spanish gunboats, who, with unsuspecting simplicity, had joined them, worked still further up the harbour till they opened the Spanish line-of-battle ships in Cavita Road. The wind dropped, and these two audacious British frigates lay becalmed in an enemy's port, and within three miles of a squadron of hostile seventy-fours and heavy frigates.

A Spanish guard-boat rowing twelve oars pulled out to the *Fox*, bringing the captain of one of the Spanish frigates and a party of officers. They were received as guests, handed politely down to the gun-room, told that the frigates were part of M. Sercey's squadron come into Manila for refreshment, etc.

"Flourishing his clenched fist, challenged the Frenchmen to 'Come on!'"

Wine was poured into the unsuspecting Spaniards and information pumped out of them. Enthusiastic toasts of success to the Spanish and French fleets, and the confusion of the British, were drunk; and then, observing other boats approaching from the shore, the British captains undeceived their guests, the captain of the Spanish frigate almost fainting with astonishment and horror under the shock.

Meanwhile the admiral's barge, rowing twenty oars, with a party of officers, including the governor's nephew, had come alongside, and a second felucca, with another company of officers bringing congratulations and offers of all assistance to the supposed Frenchmen. These officers were, in turn, shown down into the gun-room, and learned they were prisoners; the Spanish sailors in like manner were conveyed to the forecastle, where, with many apologies, they were stripped of their clothes. A party of British seamen attired themselves in these, stepped into the Spanish boat, rowed off to the three unsuspecting gunboats, and carried them without a shot being fired, 118 officers and men being taken prisoners. The port by this time was in a state of general alarm, only the courage or the means for organising an attack on the audacious British frigates somehow failed. But the *Sybille* and the *Fox* had done a good morning's work. They had captured, in the middle of an enemy's port and almost under the guns of an enemy's fleet, seven boats heavily armed, with two hundred

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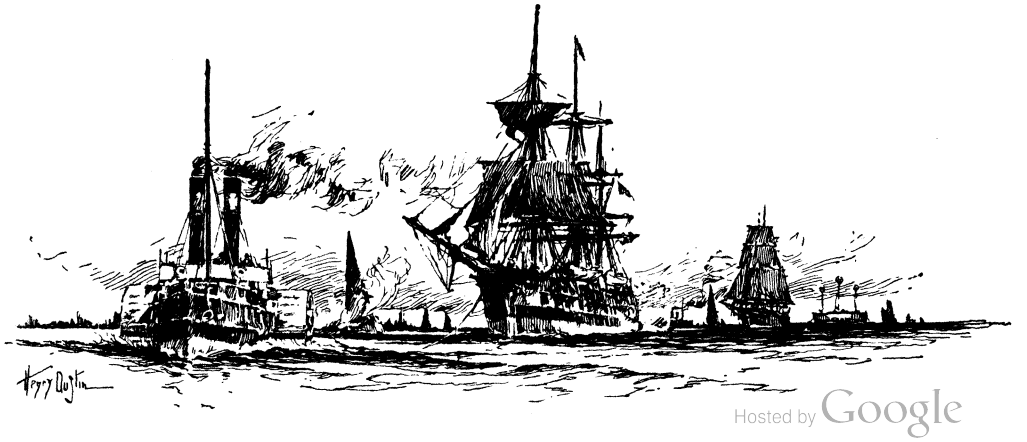
prisoners, and then sailed triumphantly out without having a man hurt.

A tale of well-nigh incredible daring, qualified by humorous coolness, is supplied by the performance of the *Sheerness*, a tiny hired cutter, off Brest in September, 1803. The *Sheerness* was a little look-out cutter, employed in watching the French fleet in Brest Harbour. Its commander, Lieutenant Rowed, was a youthful officer of A'Court's school. Rowed discovered in the haze of a September dawn two *chasse-marées* close in shore, stealing into Brest Harbour. He despatched a boat, with seven men and a mate, to cut off one, and with the *Sheerness* itself he chased the other close under a heavy battery nine miles east of Bec-du-Raz.

At ten o'clock it fell dead calm, and the *chasse-marée*, under the shelter of the battery, defied Lieutenant Henry Rowed and his absurd cutter. Rowed had one tiny boat hanging from the stern of his cutter, intended to carry two hands, but into which five men, with much delicate balancing, might be packed. Rowed announced his intention of putting off in the dinghy to attack the *chasse-marée*, and called majestically for four volunteers. The whole crew stepped forward. The boatswain and three hands were picked, and, with the lieutenant, got into the dinghy and set off on a row of four miles to attack the *chasse-marée*, the battery, and, in fact, the entire realm of France itself, if necessary! The battery stood within a stone's throw of the beach, the *chasse-marée* was run ashore, and thirty French soldiers were drawn up on the sand to protect it with their musketry. The dinghy solemnly bumped against the side of the *chasse-marée*, and as its crew clambered over the bulwarks on one side, the Frenchman's crew disappeared into the shallow water on the other side!

The French infantry opened fire, but Rowed and his four men, having hoisted the foresail as a sort of canvas screen, so that the soldiers at least should not take deliberate aim at them, proceeded to cut the vessel's cables and get her afloat. The musketry crackled fiercely from the beach, and the tapping of the musket balls sounded like the strokes of many hammers on the ship's bulwarks. But the flowing tide lifted the *chasse-marée* off the sand, and Rowed and his men got once more into their dinghy and proceeded to tug their prize out to sea. They had towed her a third of a mile when a French boat that had stolen up unobserved, containing an officer and nine men, armed with muskets, rounded the stern of the captured *chasse-marée* and drew up alongside. The English boatswain instantly dropped his oar, clambered from the dinghy over the *chasse-marée's* bows, ran aft to where the French boat was drawing up, and without cutlass or musket, but flourishing his clenched fist, challenged the Frenchmen to "come on!" The Frenchmen actually paused before that threatening apparition! Perhaps it was generosity that forbade them to fire on a single unarmed man.

Meanwhile Rowed and his three sailors clambered out of his dinghy, and, running aft with muskets, opened fire on the French boat. The Frenchmen hesitated to make a dash, and, while they hesitated, the sails of the *chasse-marée* filled, the craft heeled over, and glided on its course. The French boat delivered itself of an angry splutter of musketry, the great battery swore at large from the cliff overhead, and one heavy shot after another splashed the *chasse-marée* with spray. But Rowed and his four comrades carried off their prize unhurt.



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A Stately Measure.

From the Picture by G. P. Jacomb-Hood.

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A SHADOW BEFORE.*

By A. Conan Doyle.

Illustrated by R. Caton Woodville, R.I., *and* Lucy E. Kemp-Welch.

THE 15th of July, 1870, found John Worlington Dodds a ruined gamester of the Stock Exchange. Upon the 17th he was a very opulent man. And yet he had effected the change without leaving the penurious little Irish townlet of Dunsloe, which could have been bought outright for a quarter of the sum which he had earned during the single day that he was within its walls. There is a romance of finance yet to be written, a story of huge forces which are for ever waxing and waning, of bold operations, of breathless suspense, of agonised failure, of deep combinations which are baffled by others still more subtle. The mighty debts of each great European Power stand like so many columns of mercury, for ever rising and falling to indicate the pressure upon each. He who can see far enough into the future to tell how that ever-varying column will stand to-morrow is the man who has fortune within his grasp.

John Worlington Dodds had many of the gifts which lead a speculator to success. He was quick in observing, just in estimating, prompt and fearless in acting. But in finance there is always the element of luck, which, however one may eliminate it, still remains, like the blank at roulette, a constantly present handicap upon the operator. And so it was that Worlington Dodds had come to grief. On the best advices he had dabbled in the funds of a South American Republic in the days before South American Republics had been found out. The Republic defaulted and Dodds lost his money. He had bulled the shares of a Scotch railway, and a four months' strike had hit him hard. He had helped to underwrite a coffee company in the hope that the public would come along upon the feed and gradually nibble away some of his holding, but the political sky had been clouded and the public had refused to invest. Everything which he had touched had gone wrong, and now, on the eve of his marriage, young, clear-headed, and energetic, he was actually a bankrupt had his creditors chosen to make him one. But the Stock Exchange is an indulgent body. What is the case of one to-day may be that of another to-morrow, and everyone is interested in seeing that the stricken man is given time to rise again. So the burden of Worlington Dodds was lightened for him, many shoulders helped to bear it, and he was able to go for a little summer tour into Ireland, for the doctors had ordered him rest and change of air to restore his shaken nervous system. Thus it was that upon the 15th of July, 1870, he found himself at his breakfast in the fly-blown coffee room of the George Hotel in the market square of Dunsloe.

It is a dull and depressing coffee room and one which is usually empty, but on this particular day it was as crowded and noisy as that of any London hotel. Every table was occupied, and a thick smell of fried bacon and of fish hung in the air. Heavily-booted men clattered in and out, spurs jingled, riding crops were stacked in corners, and there was a general atmosphere of horse. The conversation, too, was of nothing else. From every side Worlington Dodds heard of yearlings, of windgalls, of roarers, of spavins, of cribsuckers, of a hundred other terms which were as unintelligible to him as his own Stock Exchange jargon would have been to the company. He asked the waiter for the reason of it all, and the waiter was an astonished man that there should be anyone in this world who did not know it.

"Shure it's the Dunsloe horse fair, your honour—the greatest horse fair in all Oireland. It lasts for a wake, and the dalers come from far an' near, from England an'

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Scotland an' iverywhere. If you look out of the winder, your honour, you'll see the horses, and its asy your honour's conscience must be or you wouldn't slape so sound that the cratures didn't rouse you with their clatter."

Dodds had a recollection that he had heard a confused murmur, which had interwoven itself with his dreams—a sort of steady rhythmic beating and clanking—and now when he looked through the window he saw the cause of it. The square was packed with horses from end to end—greys, bays, browns, blacks, chestnuts, young ones and old, fine ones and coarse, horses of every conceivable sort and size. It seemed a huge function for so small a town, and he remarked as much to the waiter.

"Well, you see, your honour, the horses don't live in the town an' they don't vex their heads how small it is. But it's in the very centre of the horse bradin' districts of Oireland, so where should they come to be sould if it wasn't to Dunsloe?"

The waiter had a telegram in his hand, and he turned the address to Worlington Dodds.

"Shure I niver heard such a name, sorr. Maybe you could tell me who owns it?"

Dodds looked at the envelope. Strellenhaus was the name.

"No, I don't know," said he. "I never heard it before. It's a foreign name. Perhaps if you were——"

But at that moment a little round-faced, ruddy-cheeked gentleman, who was breakfasting at the next table, leaned forward and interrupted him.

"Did you say a foreign name, sir?" said he.

"Strellenhaus is the name."

"'I am Mr. Strellenhaus.'"

"I am Mr. Strellenhaus—Mr. Julius Strellenhaus of Liverpool. I was expecting a telegram. Thank you very much."

He sat so near that Dodds, without any wish to play the spy, could not help to some extent overlooking him as he opened the envelope. The message was a very long one. Quite a wad of melon-tinted paper came out from the tawny envelope. Mr. Strellenhaus arranged the sheets methodically upon the tablecloth in front of him, so that no eye but his own could see them. Then he took out a note-book, and with an anxious face he began to make entries in it, glancing first

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at the telegram and then at the book, and writing apparently one letter or figure at a time. Dodds was interested, for he knew exactly what the man was doing. He was working out a cypher. Dodds had often done it himself. And then suddenly the little man turned very pale, as if the full purport of the message had been a shock to him. Dodds had done that also, and his sympathies were all with his neighbour. Then the stranger rose, and, leaving his breakfast untasted, he walked out of the room.

"I'm thinkin' that the gintleman has had bad news, sorr," said the confidential waiter.

"Looks like it," Dodds answered, and at that moment his thoughts were suddenly drawn off into another direction.

The boots had entered the room with a telegram in his hand.

"Where's Mr. Mancune?" said he to the waiter.

"Well, there are some quare names about. What was it you said?"

"Mr. Mancune," said the boots, glancing about him. "Ah, there he is!" and he handed the telegram to a gentleman who was sitting reading the paper in a corner.

Dodds' eyes had already fallen upon this man, and he had wondered vaguely what he was doing in such company. He was a tall, white-haired, eagle-nosed gentleman, with a waxed moustache and a carefully pointed beard—an aristocratic type which seemed out of its element among the rough, hearty, noisy dealers who surrounded him. This, then, was Mr. Mancune, for whom the second telegram was intended.

As he opened it, tearing it open with a feverish haste, Dodds could perceive that it was as bulky as the first one. He observed also from the delay in reading it that it was also in some sort of cypher. The gentleman did not write down any translation of it, but he sat for some time with his nervous thin fingers twitching amongst the hairs of his white beard, and his shaggy brows bent in the deepest and most absorbed attention whilst he mastered the meaning of it. Then he sprang suddenly to his feet, his eyes flashed, his cheeks flushed, and in his excitement he crumpled the message up in his hand. With an effort he mastered his emotion, put the paper into his pocket, and walked out of the room

This was enough to excite a less astute and imaginative man than Worlington Dodds. Was there any connection between these two messages, or was it merely a coincidence? Two men with strange names receive two telegrams within a few minutes of each other, each of a considerable length, each in cypher, and each causing keen emotion to the man who received it. One turned pale. The other sprang excitedly to his feet. It might be a coincidence, but it was a very curious one. If it was not a coincidence, then what could it mean? Were they confederates who pretended to work apart, but who each received identical orders from some person at a distance? That was possible, and yet there were difficulties in the way. He puzzled and puzzled, but could find no satisfactory solution to the problem. All breakfast he was turning it over in his mind.

When breakfast was over he sauntered out into the market square, where the horse sale was already in progress. The yearlings were being sold first—tall, long-legged, skittish, wild-eyed creatures, who had run free upon the upland pastures, with ragged hair and towsey manes, but hardy, inured to all weathers, and with the makings of splendid hunters and steeplechasers when corn and time had brought them to maturity. They were largely of thoroughbred blood, and were being bought by English dealers, who would invest a few pounds now on what they might sell for fifty guineas in a few years if all went well. It was legitimate speculation, for the horse is a delicate creature, he is afflicted with many ailments, the least accident may destroy his value, he is a certain expense and an uncertain profit, and for one who comes safely to maturity several may bring no return at all. So the English horse-dealers took their risks as they bought up the shaggy Irish yearlings. One man with a ruddy face and a yellow overcoat took them by the dozen with as much *sang froid* as if they had been oranges, entering each bargain in a bloated note-book. He bought forty or fifty during the time that Dodds was watching him.

"Who is that?" he asked his neighbour, whose spurs and gaiters showed that he was likely to know.

The man stared in astonishment at the stranger's ignorance.

"Why, that's Jim Holloway, the great Jim Holloway," said he; then, seeing by the blank look upon Dodds's face that even this information had not helped him much, he went into details. "Sure he's the head of Holloway and Morland, of London," said he. "He's the buying partner, and he buys cheap, and the other stays at home and sells, and he sells dear. He owns more horses than any man

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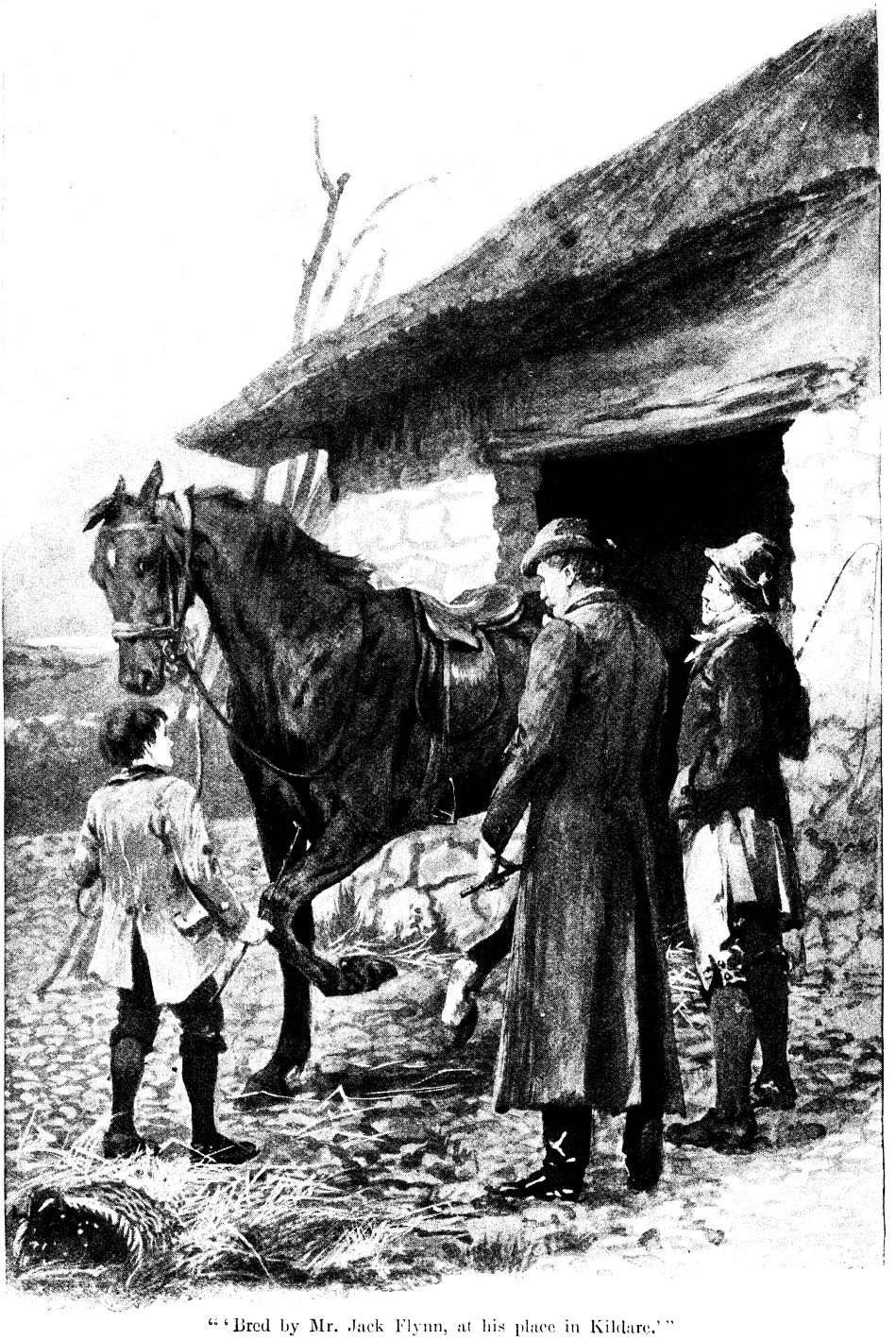

"'Bred by Mr. Jack Flynn, at his place in Kildare.'"

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in the world and asks the best money for them. I daresay you'll find that half of what are sold at the Dunsloe fair this day will go to him, and he's got such a purse that there's not a man who can bid against him."

Worlington Dodds watched the doings of the great dealer with interest. He had passed left in possession of the field. At the same time he was a shrewd observer, and when, as happened more than once, he believed that someone was bidding against him simply in order to run him up, the head would cease suddenly to nod, the note-book would be closed with a snap, and the intruder would be left with a purchase which he did not

"The horse sale was already in progress."

on now to the two-year-olds and three-year-olds, full-grown horses, but still a little loose in the limb and weak in the bone. The London buyer was choosing his animals carefully, but having chosen them the vigour of his competition drove all other bidders out of it. With a careless nod he would run the figure up five pounds at a time, until he was

desire upon his hands. All Dodds's business instincts were aroused by the tactics of this great operator, and he stood in the crowd watching with the greatest interest all that occurred.

It is not to buy young horses, however, that the great dealers come to Ireland, and the real business of the fair commenced

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when the four and five-year-olds were reached, the full-grown perfect horses at their prime and ready for any work or any fatigue. Seventy magnificent creatures had been brought down by a single breeder, a comfortable looking, keen eyed, ruddy cheeked gentleman who stood beside the salesman and whispered cautions and precepts into his ear.

"That's Flynn of Kildare," said Dodds's informant. "Jack Flynn has brought down that string of horses, and the other large string over yonder belongs to Tom Flynn, his brother. The two of them together are the two first breeders in Ireland."

A crowd had gathered in front of the horses. By common consent a place had been made for Mr. Holloway, and Dodds could catch a glimpse of his florid face and yellow covert coat in the front rank. He had opened his note-book and was tapping his teeth reflectively with his pencil as he eyed the horses.

"You'll see a fight now between the first seller and the first buyer in the country," said Dodds's acquaintance. "They are a beautiful string, anyhow. I shouldn't be surprised if he didn't average five-and-thirty pound apiece for the lot as they stand."

The salesman had mounted upon a chair, and his keen, clean-shaven face overlooked the crowd. Mr. Jack Flynn's grey whiskers were at his elbow, and Mr. Holloway immediately in front.

"You've seen these horses, gentlemen," said the salesman, with a backward sweep of his hand towards the line of tossing heads and streaming manes. "When you know that they are bred by Mr. Jack Flynn, at his place in Kildare, you will have a guarantee of their quality. They are the best that Ireland can produce, and in this class of horse the best that Ireland can produce are the best in the world, as every riding man knows well. Hunters or carriage horses, all warranted sound and bred from the best stock. There are seventy in Mr. Jack Flynn's string, and he bids me say that if any wholesale dealer would make one bid for the whole lot, to save time, he would have the preference over any purchaser."

There was a pause and a whisper from the crowd in front, with some expressions of discontent. By a single sweep all the small dealers had been put out of it. It was only a long purse which could buy on such a scale as that. The salesman looked round him inquiringly.

"Come, Mr. Holloway," said he at last. "You didn't come over here for the sake of the scenery. You may travel the country and not see such another string of horses. Give us a starting bid."

The great dealer was still rattling his pencil upon his front teeth.

"Well," said he at last. "They *are* a fine lot of horses, and I won't deny it. They do you credit, Mr. Flynn, I am sure. All the same, I didn't mean to fill a ship at a single bid in this fashion. I like to pick and choose my horses."

"In that case Mr. Flynn is quite prepared to sell them in smaller lots," said the salesman. "It was rather for the convenience of a wholesale customer that he was prepared to put them all up together. But if no gentleman wishes to bid——"

"Wait a minute," said a voice. "They are very fine horses, these, and I will give you a bid to start you. I will give you twenty pounds each for the string of seventy."

There was a rustle as the crowd all swayed their heads to catch a glimpse of the speaker. The salesman leaned forward.

"May I ask your name, sir?"

"Strellenhaus—Mr. Strellenhaus of Liverpool."

"It's a new firm," said Dodds's neighbour. "I thought I knew them all, but I never heard of him before."

The salesman's head had disappeared, for he was whispering with the breeder. Now he suddenly straightened himself again.

"Thank you for giving us a lead, sir," said he. "Now, gentlemen, you have heard the offer of Mr. Strellenhaus of Liverpool. It will give us a base to start from. Mr. Strellenhaus has offered twenty pounds a head."

"Guineas," said Holloway.

"Bravo, Mr. Holloway. I knew that you would take a hand. You are not the man to let such a string of horses pass away from you. The bid is twenty guineas a head."

"Twenty-five pounds," said Mr. Strellenhaus.

"Twenty-six."

"Thirty."

It was London against Liverpool, and it was the head of the trade against an outsider. Still, the one man had increased his bids by fives and the other only by ones. Those fives meant determination and also wealth. Holloway had ruled the market so long that the crowd was delighted at finding someone who would stand up to him.

"The bid now stands at thirty pounds a head," said the salesman. "The word lies with you, Mr. Holloway."

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The London dealer was glancing keenly at his unknown opponent, and he was asking himself whether this was a genuine rival, or whether it was a device of some sort—an agent of Flynn's, perhaps—for running up the price. Little Mr. Strellenhaus, the same apple-faced gentleman whom Dodds had noticed in the coffee-room, stood looking at the horses with the sharp, quick glances of a man who knows what he is looking for.

"Thirty-one," said Holloway, with the air of a man who has gone to his extreme limit.

"Thirty-two," said Strellenhaus promptly.

Holloway grew angry at this persistent opposition. His red face flushed redder still.

"Thirty-three," he shouted.

"Thirty-four," said Strellenhaus.

Holloway became thoughtful and entered a few figures in his note-book. There were seventy horses. He knew that Flynn's stock was always of the highest quality. With the hunting season coming on he might rely upon selling them at an average of from forty-five to fifty. Some of them might carry a heavy weight and would run to three figures. On the other hand there was the feed and keep of them for three months, the danger of the voyage, the chance of influenza or some of those other complaints which run through an entire stable as measles go through a nursery. Deducting all this, it was a question whether at the present price any profit would be left upon the transaction. Every pound that he bid meant seventy out of his pocket. And yet he could not submit to be beaten by this stranger without a struggle. As a business matter it was important to him to be recognised as the head of his profession. He would make one more effort if he sacrificed his profit by doing so.

"At the end of your rope, Mr. Holloway?" asked the salesman, with the suspicion of a sneer.

"Thirty-five," cried Holloway gruffly.

"Thirty-six," said Strellenhaus.

"Then I wish you joy of your bargain," said Holloway. "I don't buy at that price, but I should be glad to sell you some."

Mr. Strellenhaus took no notice of the irony. He was still looking critically at the horses. The salesman glanced round him in a perfunctory way.

"Thirty-six pounds bid," said he. "Mr. Jack Flynn's lot is going to Mr. Strellenhaus of Liverpool, at thirty-six pounds a head. Going—going——"

"Forty," cried a high, thin, clear voice.

A buzz rose from the crowd, and they were all on tiptoe again, trying to catch a glimpse of this reckless buyer. Being a tall man, Dodds could see over the others, and there at the side of Holloway he saw the masterful nose and aristocratic beard of the second stranger in the coffee-room. A sudden personal interest added itself to the scene. He felt that he was on the verge of something—something dimly seen—which he could himself turn to account. The two men with strange names, the telegrams, the horses—what was underlying it all?

The salesman was all animation again, and Mr. Jack Flynn was sitting up with his white whiskers bristling and his eyes twinkling. It was the best deal which he had ever made in his fifty years of experience.

"What name, sir?" asked the salesman.

"Mr. Mancune."

"Address?"

"Mr. Mancune of Glasgow."

"Thank you for your bid, sir. Forty pounds a head has been bid by Mr. Mancune of Glasgow. Any advance upon forty?"

"Forty-one," said Strellanhaus.

"Forty-five," said Mancune.

The tactics had changed, and it was the turn of Strellenhaus now to advance by ones, while his rival sprang up by fives. But the former was as dogged as ever.

"Forty-six," said he.

"Fifty," cried Mancune.

It was unheard of. The most that the horses could possibly average at a retail price was as much as these men were willing to pay wholesale.

"Two lunatics from Bedlam," whispered the angry Holloway. "If I was Flynn I would see the colour of their money before I went any further."

The same thought had occurred to the salesman.

"As a mere matter of business, gentlemen," said he, "it is usual in such cases to put down a small deposit as a guarantee of *bona fides*. You will understand how I am placed, and that I have not had the pleasure of doing business with either of you before."

"How much?" asked Strellenhaus briefly.

"Should we say five hundred?"

"Here is a note for a thousand pounds."

"And here is another," said Mancune.

"Nothing could be more handsome, gentlemen," said the salesman. "It's a treat to see such a spirited competition. The last bid was fifty pounds a head from Mancune. The word lies with you, Mr. Strellenhaus."

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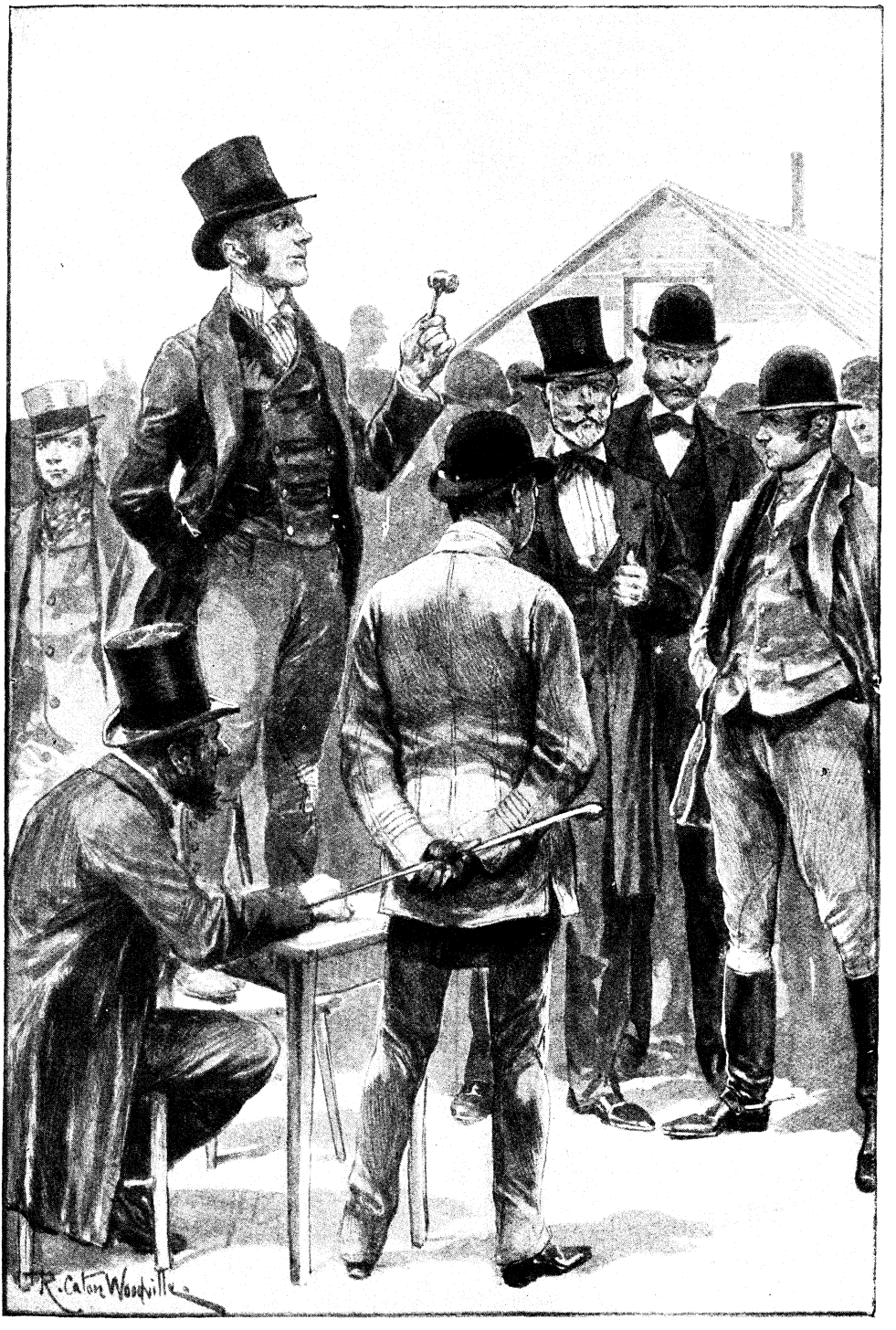

"The salesman looked round him inquiringly."

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Mr. Jack Flynn whispered something to the salesman.

"Quite so! Mr. Flynn suggests, gentlemen, that as you are both large buyers, it would, perhaps, be a convenience to you if he was to add the string of Mr. Tom Flynn, which consists of seventy animals of precisely the same quality, making one hundred and forty in all. Have you any objection, Mr. Mancune?"

"No, sir."

"And you, Mr. Strellenhaus?"

"I should prefer it."

"Very handsome! Very handsome indeed!" murmured the salesman. "Then I understand, Mr. Mancune, that your offer of fifty pounds a head extends to the whole of these horses?"

"Yes, sir."

A long breath went up from the crowd.

"'It is possible that I may see the horses again.'"

Seven thousand pounds at one deal. It was a record for Dunsloe.

"Any advance, Mr. Strellenhaus?"

"Fifty-one."

"Fifty-five."

"Fifty-six."

"Sixty."

They could hardly believe their ears. Holloway stood with his mouth open, staring blankly in front of him. The salesman tried hard to look as if such bidding and such prices were nothing unusual. Jack Flynn of Kildare smiled benignly and rubbed his hands together. The crowd listened in dead silence.

"Sixty-one," said Strellenhaus. From the beginning he had stood without a trace of emotion upon his round face, like a little automatic figure which bid by clockwork. His rival was of a more excitable nature. His eyes were shining and he was for ever twitching at his beard.

"Sixty-five," he cried.

"Sixty-six."

"Seventy."

But the clockwork had run down. No answering bid came from Mr. Strellenhaus.

"Seventy bid, sir."

Mr. Strellenhaus shrugged his shoulders.

"I am buying for another, and I have reached his limit," said he. "If you will permit me to send for instructions——"

"I am afraid, sir, that the sale must proceed."

"Then the horses belong to this gentleman." For the first time he turned towards his rival, and their glances crossed like sword blades. "It is possible that I may see the horses again."

"I hope so," said Mr. Mancune, and his white waxed moustache gave a feline upward bristle.

So, with a bow, they separated. Mr. Strellenhaus walked down to the telegraph office, where his message was delayed because Mr. Worlington Dodds was already at the end of the wires, for after dim guesses and vague conjecture he had suddenly caught a clear view of this coming event which had cast so curious a shadow before it in this little Irish town. Political rumours, names, appearances, telegrams, seasoned horses at any price, there could only be one meaning to it. He held a secret and he meant to use it.

Mr. Warner, who was the partner of Mr. Worlington Dodds, and who was suffering from the same eclipse, had gone down to the Stock Exchange, but had found little consolation there, for the European system was in a ferment, and rumours of peace and of war were succeeding each other with such rapidity and assurance that it was impossible to know which to trust. It was obvious that a fortune lay either way, for every rumour set the funds fluctuating, but without special information it was impossible to act, and no one dared to plunge heavily upon the strength of newspaper surmise and the

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gossip of the street. Warner knew that an hour's work might resuscitate the fallen fortunes of himself and his partner, and yet he could not afford to make a mistake. He returned to his office in the afternoon, half inclined to back the chances of peace, for of all war scares not one in ten comes to pass. As he entered the office a telegram lay upon the table. It was from Dunsloe, a place of which he had never heard, and was signed by his absent partner. The message was in cypher, but he soon translated it, for it was short and crisp.

"I am a bear of everything German and French. Sell, sell, sell, keep on selling."

For a moment Warner hesitated. What could Worlington Dodds know at Dunsloe which was not known in Throgmorton Street? But he remembered the quickness and decision of his partner. He would not have sent such a message without very good grounds. If he was to act at all he must act at once, so hardening his heart he went down to the house and, dealing upon that curious system by which a man can sell what he has not got and what he could not pay for if he had it, he disposed of heavy parcels of French and German securities. He had caught the market in one of its little spasms of hope, and there was no lack of buying until his own persistent selling caused others to follow his lead, and so brought about a reaction. When Warner returned to his offices it took him some hours to work out his accounts, and he emerged into the streets in the evening with the absolute certainty that the next settling day would leave him either hopelessly bankrupt or exceedingly prosperous.

It all depended upon Worlington Dodds' information. What could he possibly have found out at Dunsloe?

And then suddenly he saw a newspaper boy fasten a poster upon a lamp-post, and a little crowd had gathered round it in an instant. One of them waved his hat in the air. Another shouted to a friend across the street. Warner hurried up and caught a

"Warner caught a glimpse of the poster."

glimpse of the poster between two craning heads—

"FRANCE DECLARES WAR ON GERMANY."

"By Jove!" cried Warner. "Old Dodds was right after all."

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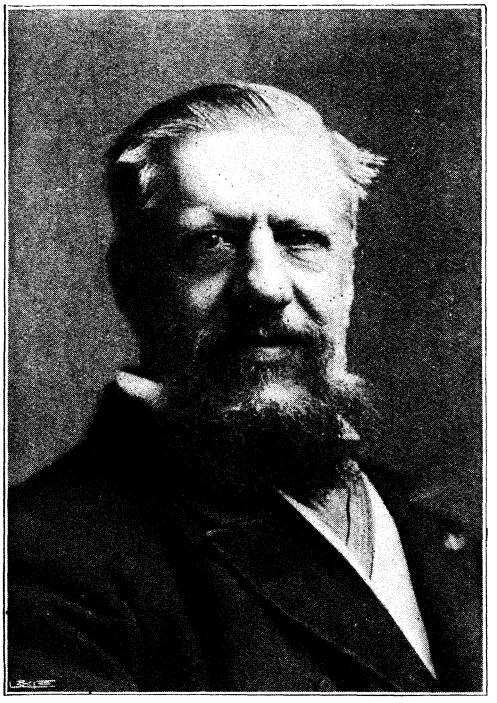
AN INFORMAL INTRODUCTION

BY WAY OF PREFACE TO OUR CHRISTMAS SUPPLEMENT.

By Sir Edwin Arnold, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.



SIR EDWIN ARNOLD, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.
Photo by Elliott & Fry, Baker Street.

"In the garden of my Japanese home in Tokyo I have just perused the last sheets of my son's philosophical and historical romance, 'Phra the Phœnician.'" So I wrote when the book which to-day appears in association with the Windsor Magazine was first shown to me. "Amid other scenes," I went on to say, "I might be led to analyse, to criticise, perhaps a little to argue, about the singular hypothesis upon which he builds his story. Here, with a Buddhist temple at my gate, and with Japanese Buddhists around me, nothing seems more natural than that an author, sufficiently gifted with imagination and study, should follow his hero beyond the narrow limits of one little existence, down the chain of many lives, taken up link by link, after each long interval of rest and reward in the Paradise of Jô-Dô. I have read several chapters to my Asiatic friends, and they say, 'Oh, yes! It is *Ingwa!* it is *Karma!* That is all quite true. We, also, have lived many times, and shall live many times more on this earth.' One of them opens the *shoji* to let a purple and silver butterfly escape into the sunshine. She thinks some day it will thank her—perhaps a million years hence. Moreover, here is a passage which I lately noted, suggestive enough to serve as preface, even by itself, to the present book. Commenting on a line in my 'Song Celestial,' the writer thus remarks: 'The human soul should therefore be regarded as already in the present life connected at the same time with two worlds, of which, so far as it is confined by personal unity to a body, the material world only is clearly felt. It is, therefore, as good as proved—or, to be diffuse, it could easily be proved—or, better still, it will hereafter be proved (I know not where or when)—that the human soul, even in this life, stands in indissoluble community with all immaterial natures of the spirit-world; that it mutually acts upon them and receives from them impressions, of which, however, as man it is unconscious, as long as all goes well. It is, therefore, truly one and the same subject, which belongs at the same time to the visible and to the invisible world, but not just the same person, since the representations of the one world, by reason of its different quality, are not associated with ideas of the other, and therefore what I think as spirit is not remembered by me as man.'"

I, myself, have consequently taken the stupendous postulates of Phra's narrative with equanimity, if not acceptance, and derived from it a pleasure and entertainment too great to express, since the critic, in this case, is a well-pleased father.

The author of "Phra" has claimed, for Romance, the ancient license accorded to Poetry and to Painting—

> Pictoribus atque poetis
> Quidlibet audendi semper fuit æqua potestas.

He has supposed a young Phœnician merchant, full of the love of adventure, and endowed with a large and observant if very mystic philosophy—such as would serve for

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no bad standpoint whence to witness the rise and fall of religions and peoples. The adventurer sets out for the "tin islands," or Cassiterides, at a date before the Roman conquest of England. He dies and lives anew many times, but preserves his personal identity under the garb of half-a-dozen transmigrations. And yet, while renewing in each existence the characteristic passions and sentiments which constitute his individuality and preserve the unity of the narrative, the author seems to me to have adapted him to varying times and places with a *vraisemblance* and absence of effort which are extremely effective.

A Briton in British days, the slave-consort of his Druid wife, he passes, by daring but convenient inventiveness, into the person of a centurion in the household of a noble Roman lady who illustrates in her surroundings the luxurious vices of the latter empire with some relics still of the older republican virtues. Hence he glides again into oblivion, yet awakes from the mystical slumber in time to take part in King Harold's gallant but fatal stand against the Normans.

He enjoys the repose, as a Saxon thane, which the policy of the Conqueror granted to the vanquished; but after some startling adventures in the vast oak woods of the south kingdom, is rudely ousted from his homestead by the "foreigners," and in a neighbouring monastery sinks into secular forgetfulness once more of wife and children, lands and life.

On the return of consciousness he finds himself enshrined as a saint, thanks to the strange physical phenomena of his suspended animation, and learns from the abbot that he has lain there in the odour of sanctity, according to indisputable church records, during three hundred years.

He wanders off again, finding everything new and strange, and becomes an English knight under King Edward III. He is followed to Crecy by a damsel who from act

THE AUTHOR OF "PHRA THE PHŒNICIAN," AND HIS WIFE.

Photo by Van der Weyde, Regent Street.

Edwin L. Arnold

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to act of his long life-drama similarly renews an existence linked with his own, and who constantly seeks his love. She wears the armour of a brother knight, and on the field of battle she sacrifices her life for his.

Yet once more a long spell of sleep, which is not death, brings this much-wandering Phra to the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and it is there, after many and strange vicissitudes, he writes his experiences, and the curtain finally falls over the last passage of this remarkable record.

Such, briefly, is the framework of a creation which, while it has certainly proved to me extremely seductive as a story, is full, I think, of philosophical suggestiveness. As long as men count mournfully the years of that human life which M. Renan has declared to be so ridiculously short, so long their fancies will hover about the possibility of an *elixir vitæ* for splendidly extended spans like those ascribed to the old patriarchs, and will meditate with fascination the mystical doctrines of Buddhism and the Vedantas. In such a spirit the Egyptians wrapped their dead in careful fashion, after filling the body with preservatives; and if ancient tomes have the "Seven Sleepers" of the Koran, the Danish King who dozes under the Castle of Elsinore, and our own undying King Arthur, do we not go to see "Rip van Winkle" at the play, and is not hibernation one among the problems of modern science, which whispers that we might, if we liked, indefinitely adjourn the waste of corporeal tissue, and spread our seventy or eighty years over so many centuries?

But to be charming an author is not obliged to be credible, or what would become of the "Arabian Nights," of "Gulliver," and of the best books in the library? Personally I admire and I like "Phra" enormously, and counsel everybody to read it, forgetting who it is that respectfully offers this advice until the end of the book, when I shall be no longer afraid if they remember.

A few words I may perhaps add about the author himself.

Born at Swanscombe in Kent in 1857, my son, Edwin Lester Arnold, accompanied me as an infant to India on my first visit to that country. It was a time when the luxurious developments of modern travel were unknown; the famous Canal, of course, was not even commenced, and the tedious journey from Alexandria to Suez was performed by outward bound Anglo-Indians who desired to avoid the long route by the Cape in conveyances little more convenient than the London omnibus. In India, when we arrived, the first flames of the great mutiny were blazing, the classic names of Havelock and Outram were on all men's lips, and though he was too young to remember it, he has seen the English soldiers kneeling at their prayers in the Poona church, their muskets piled at hand in the aisle, ready for the call that might come at any moment, and many other evidences of that fierce struggle which the strong and just hand of English rule, rather than the lapse of time, has put so far away from us to-day. Returning with me to England, he remained at home until the appointment of my old friend Dr. Jex Blake to the Headmastership of Cheltenham College gave an opportunity for him to see something of that public school life which, in spite of the detractions of critics, I hold to be one of the great privileges of English boys. In 1873 he commenced a course of studies on some of the great agricultural estates of Scotland and the Midlands, I, who know the stress and sorrows of life in the crowd, half hoping for a happier and quieter vocation for him; but his natural love of travel and the unpromising aspect of our misunderstood British agriculture drew him abroad. Before he was twenty-one he was alone in the forests of Travancore, wrestling with the delightful but difficult task of bringing an enormous tract of tropical woodland under spade and axe. I need not tell this part of his story. He has recounted it himself in a book which of its kind is perhaps not less picturesque than "Phra." It ended for him, as the pioneer's story often ends, in a compulsory retreat before the demons of malaria and fever.

He travelled on the Continent with me and alone during the period of enforced idleness which ensued, and in 1883 joined the staff of the *Daily Telegraph*.

"Phra" is the latest of several books by the same pen, though its author's initial attempt in the dangerous but fascinating field of romance. I can only hope it may afford pleasure this Christmas, in the charming form which the enterprise of the WINDSOR MAGAZINE has given it, to all those who love the picturesque and delight in imaginative romances of English history.

Edwin Arnold

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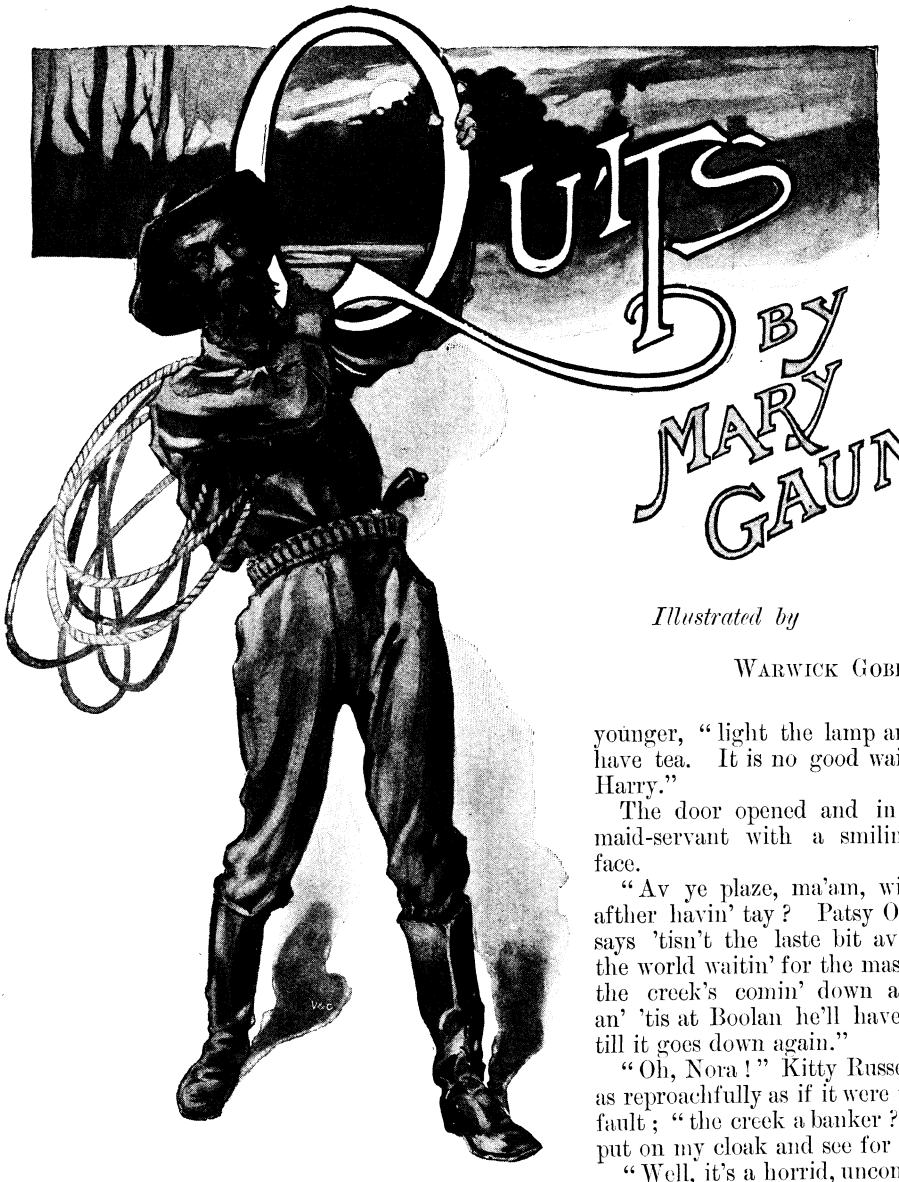

QUITS

BY MARY GAUNT

Illustrated by

WARWICK GOBLE.

THE rain was coming down in torrents, and in the gathering darkness it was not easy to see far. One or two currajong trees and some shrubs loomed out with indistinct outlines, and close at hand in the garden beds the drowned jonquils and wallflowers and violets were beaten flat into the mud. In truth it was a miserable evening, and inside the little sitting-room, with its easy-chairs, open piano, and bright fire, looked wonderfully cosy and comfortable.

Two women stood peering out into the rain and mist.

"Come along, Kitty dear," said the younger, "light the lamp and let us have tea. It is no good waiting for Harry."

The door opened and in came a maid-servant with a smiling Irish face.

"Av ye plaze, ma'am, will ye be afther havin' tay? Patsy O'Donnell says 'tisn't the laste bit av good in the world waitin' for the masther, for the creek's comin' down a banker, an' 'tis at Boolan he'll have to stop till it goes down again."

"Oh, Nora!" Kitty Russell spoke as reproachfully as if it were the girl's fault; "the creek a banker? I must put on my cloak and see for myself."

"Well, it's a horrid, uncomfortable thing to do," said her sister-in-law resignedly, "but I suppose I must come and look after you."

The creek was certainly a banker. This morning the banks had stood ten feet above the level of the water, and now here was the water up to them, above them, lapping gently against the feet of those who had come down to look at it. Out in the middle of the stream it was a raging torrent, tearing along and lashing itself into a fury of brown-white foam when it met any opposition. A fallen tree had swept right across it, and piling themselves against it were other broken branches and a couple of woolly

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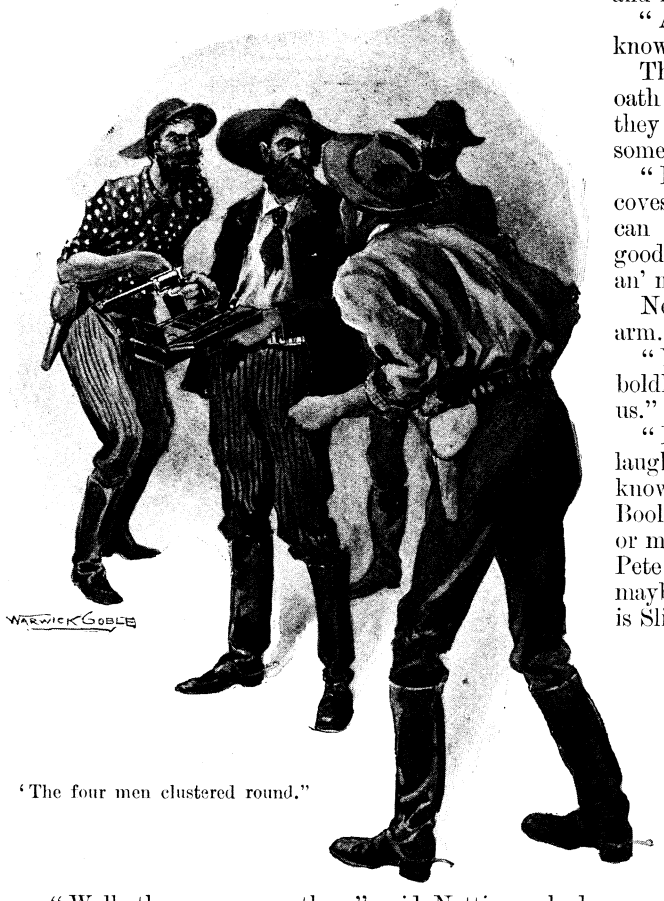
things that looked like sheep—indeed, the two station hands who had come down from the hut and were standing looking up stream said they were dead sheep, and that there would be more presently. Kitty clutched her cloak tighter and drew it closer round her to keep out the cold and the rain.

"I wish Harry were home," she sighed for the twentieth time.



'The four men clustered round."

"Well, there you are, then," said Nettie, "Here he comes."

Through the gathering gloom rode four men all in a bunch. The horses hung their heads and plodded on wearily as if they had come far and fast, and the riders were huddled up in rough cloaks; but they, too, were miserable and tired, if one might judge by their attitudes.

"Nettie! How can you——?"

"I don't like the look of them at all," interrupted one of the men. "They're rum-looking customers," he said, dashing the water out of his eyes. "If I was you ladies, I'd make a bolt for the house."

It almost seemed as if the foremost rider heard them, for in a moment he had raised his right arm and ridden straight towards them.

Kitty stood still as though fascinated, though the pistol was not directed at her but at the man beside her.

'Throw up your hands," came the order.

Up went his hands above his head, and his companion followed suit.

"All right, boss, don't shoot. We know when to cave in."

The man on horseback swore an oath that intimated he rather hoped they did, and if they didn't he had some little persuaders handy.

"Dog," said he, "you take them coves back to the hut. Blue Charlie can take the horses an' give 'em a good square meal, poor beggars. Jim an' me'll escort the ladies."

Nettie caught her sister-in-law's arm.

"You'd better be careful," she said boldly. "My brother is watching us."

"Now, lady," said the leader, laughing, "none of that skite. We know well enough the boss is at Boolan, an' ain't likely to get back, or maybe we shouldn't be here. I'm Pete Aitken the Night-Owl, who maybe you hearn tell on, an' this here is Slim Jim, my mate."

The two women, holding each other's hands, looked round helplessly. The swirling creek was behind them, the overflowing waters were lapping round their very feet now, the rain was coming down harder than ever, the darkness was falling, and the two men, the only ones they could look to for protection, had gone back to the hut apparently contentedly enough.

Slim Jim came close up to them, pushing his hat on to the back of his head. His eyes looked honest and blue, and he had rather a kindly face than otherwise, with a big, fair beard and a fringe of yellow hair that came down on to his forehead.

"Don't be afeard," he said. "We don't want to touch a hair of your head. But we must have some tucker and some of them flimsies of your man's to carry on with."

The women looked at him doubtfully and then at his companion. The sight of him was

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certainly not reassuring, though he had put on a grin intended to charm.

"I suppose," said Kitty, hesitating, "we'd better go back."

News spreads fast. On the verandah the cook met them, her eyes full of tears, and Nora the housemaid was raging.

"If them galoots at the hut had the spunk av a mouse," she began.

"There, Nora, there," interrupted her mistress, "never mind, it can't be helped. Get these — these — gentlemen some tea. When you have got all you want you won't stay long, will you?" she asked.

"Oh, no, we won't stop long. Just a bit of a rest an' a good tuck in's all we want. I guess we'll go when the rain's let up a bit."

Kitty looked outside into the night. Judging by the outlook there, they would keep their unwelcome guests for an indefinite period.

"If them galoots in the hut——" began Nora again, but the Night-Owl laid a threatening hand on his pistol, and her mistress silenced her with a look.

"We'll have to make the best of it, Nora," she said with a faint smile.

"There's a brave lady," said Slim Jim, as if it were a great relief to see a return to cheerfulness; "an' we'll treat you like ladies, we will, indeed.

He was so earnest they could but smile; only Nora sniffed disdainfully.

The Night-Owl lolled back in the easiest chair, Slim Jim stood by the fire looking askance at the women, the servants brought in a meal, the other two men strolled in, and the room was filled with the odour of food, and the smell of damp, not overclean, clothing.

On seeing the other two come in Nora stole outside. The Night-Owl divined her errand and laughed uproariously.

"Thinks to rout out the boys outside, does she?" he said. "Them boys is right enough. They know blamed well if they was to go agin us by so much as a wink, the Night-Owl 'ud skin 'em alive next time he come along this way."

And then he pushed aside the tea that had been offered him and called for brandy, and Kitty, very unwillingly, had to yield up the keys of the sideboard. Slim Jim saw her fear.

"I'll shoot the first man dares lay a finger on you," he said reassuringly.

"Now, Mrs. Russell," said the Night-Owl, when he had finished his meal, "we'll trouble you to hand over the cash."

Kitty pointed out the key of the writing-table drawers.

"Leave me a little," she begged.

Ten pounds all in silver shillings looked a great deal more than it really was, and the four men clustered round and began eagerly squabbling over it.

The Night-Owl emptied it out on to the dining-room table.

"Lots of time," said he, waving his pistol; "the floods is out, there ain't no one to disturb us, an' we'll divide the blanky thing up on the square."

But division did not bring content.

"You must have more money 'an this," said the leader, turning to Kitty.

"No, I haven't."

The Night-Owl put his hand on her shoulder and she shrank away trembling.

"You let her alone," said Slim Jim; "I won't have her touched. All we want is hard cash."

"We ain't come across much yet," grumbled Dog Dawney; "and we hearn Russell of Gnotuk was rich."

"You heard wrong, then," said Nettie quickly. "Look round and see for yourselves if we have any more money."

"There's ways," growled the evil-looking leader, and the women shivered with terror. What might they not do?

"We'll just look round a bit," said Slim Jim, with the air of a man who pours oil on the troubled waters. "There might be some hidden about the place, you know, an' we'd find it."

"There isn't any hidden about the place," said Kitty earnestly. "Look for yourselves, look everywhere. You can keep anything you find."

"Don't trouble yourself about that," said the Night-Owl significantly; "we ain't shy. An' if we don't find suthin' good," he added, pausing at the bedroom door, "it'll be the worse for you."

"Don't be afeard," said Slim Jim's soothing voice, "I won't let him touch you."

The flood waters were up in the garden now, and the bushrangers evidently considered themselves fairly safe, for they proceeded to light all the lamps and candles they could find. Then they roamed round the house like wantonly mischievous schoolboys, destroying everything they could find no use for. Every now and then the shrinking women could hear Slim Jim remonstrating, and his remonstrances being received with shouts of laughter. They pulled down the

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curtains in Kitty's bedroom, they threw all the bedclothes into the middle of the floor, they pulled out the contents of the chest of drawers and wardrobe, and they arrayed themselves in the clothes belonging to the absent master of the house; the Night-Owl even adorned his head with Kitty's new winter hat, a marvel of ostrich plumes and velvet that had arrived from Melbourne only the week before.

Slim Jim came in more than once to tell them not to be afraid and to apologise for the conduct of his mates.

"I can't help it, ma'am," he said, "short of shootin', there's no stoppin' 'em."

"Oh, why do you do it? why do you do it?" sighed Kitty.

He echoed the sigh.

"Why do I do it? Well, it ain't so easy to get clear as you might think."

He went back to his comrades, and Nora came in softly with her finger on her lip.

"The masther's comin', ma'am."

Kitty sprang to her feet.

"Hush, ma'am, for the love av God! I seed him mysel' t'other side av the creek in the moonlight."

"He can't get across," moaned Kitty, "and if he did they might kill him."

"He'll see there's something wrong, though," said Nettie, "with the place lighted up like this, and perhaps he'll bring help."

"He's comin' acrost," said Nora, "sure as death he's comin' acrost."

Kitty made for the door.

"He'll be drowned," she cried, "he'll be drowned!"

"Don't make a fuss, Kitty, don't make a fuss. It will be so much better if he can get here quietly."

"He'll be drowned, I tell you, he must be drowned if he tries to cross anywhere but at the ford five miles up. What does it matter if they do know he is here. Oh, Harry! Harry!" and his wife was tearing down the garden, careless that in some places the water was already up to her knees. The other two followed her.

The moon only threw fitful gleams through the broken clouds, and at first they could see nothing, only hear the roar of the waters as they swept all before them. Nettie felt Kitty was right; nothing could live that attempted to cross that raging water.

"I saw the masther," reiterated Nora above the raging of the torrent and the sobbing of the wind and rain; "I saw him riding along the bank."

"And there's his horse now," cried his sister.

But the saddle was empty.

"Oh, where is he? Where is he?" moaned his wife. "He must have been mad to try and cross here."

The rain stopped suddenly, the clouds parted, the moon sailed out into a clear patch of sky and flooded all the drowned and dreary country with her light.

"There, there, there's the masther!" cried Nora. "Praise be to the Howly Mother!"

But Kitty Russell could hardly echo her handmaiden's thankfulness.

He was there, certainly, a man in his shirt-sleeves clinging for dear life to the trunk of the big tree that was jambed across the stream; but the raging water was between them, and it threatened every moment to sweep him from his precarious hold.

His wife dropped down on her knees in the water, stretched out her arms towards him, and called aloud his name; but the wind caught the words and blew them away. It was hopeless to think of making him hear against such a blast. The emotional Irish girl wrung her hands and shrieked in sympathy, and Nettie stood silent and hopeless beside her. The man turned his head and saw them, and Kitty heard her own name brought faintly down on the wild wind.

"Call the men, Nettie, call the men! He sees us! He's asking us to help him!"

But the men refused to stir. They were perfectly civil, very sympathetic, very sorry; but it was as much as their lives were worth to leave that hut. The Night-Owl had sworn he would shoot on sight, and no questions asked, if he caught either of them outside the hut before next morning, and they knew well enough the Night-Owl was a man of his word. They liked the boss; he was a good man, but, anyhow, his life on that tree was worth more than theirs should the Night-Owl catch them on the banks of the creek.

Nettie knew her sister would be waiting, counting the moments like hours, and she rushed back.

"Kitty, Kitty, they won't stir."

Kitty turned a white, despairing face towards her in the moonlight.

"The Night-Owl promised to shoot them if they stirred before morning," gasped out Nettie, breathless from running and brutally candid in her haste, "and, anyway, they say

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"Shin Jin flung the log as far as he could"

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it is hopeless to get a man off that tree. He'll have to hang on till the floods go down."

"The tree is giving now! Nettie, Nettie! It's giving now! If the water rolls it over, it will drown him!"

The moon went under a cloud, down came the rain again, and the whole scene was blotted out from their straining eyes.

Nettie flew up to the house, right up to the men she dreaded, and begged them to let the men from the hut come to their aid.

"I'll be blowed if I do," growled the Night-Owl. "Let them coves down an' that'll make three agin us, let alone you women. No, I'm d——d if I do!"

The girl looked at him with horrified eyes. Nothing so terrible had ever come into her life before. It seemed as if she were standing apart, looking on at the misery of those other two, the big brother she had looked up to all her life, and the wife whose world he was.

Slim Jim saw the misery on her face.

"Don't take on so," he said kindly. "We'll be gone soon, an' you can all get him off then."

"He'll be dead! He'll be drowned! The tree is rolling over!"

He turned to his mate.

"I'm goin' along to see what I can do," he said. "I ain't on for drownin' the boss, whatever you coves may be. Is there any rope?" he asked Nettie.

She got a coil out of the storeroom and he took it from her and followed her down the garden.

The water was rising rapidly, and Mrs. Russell and Nora had been forced to retreat a little way, but when the moon came out again they saw that the tree trunk was still in its place and the man was still clinging to it.

Kitty raised her white, anxious face.

"Only you?" she said, "only you?"

"Yes," said Slim Jim humbly, "but I'll do my best."

"And we three can help," said Nettie, feigning a confidence she did not feel.

The bushranger looked at the raging creek doubtfully, then he picked up a piece of wood as heavy as he could throw, tied on to it the end of the coil of rope, and waded through the water up the creek. The women followed him in silence—was he not their only hope?

When next the moon came out they saw that the man clinging to the tree had just managed to clamber astride it, and was hanging on to an upstanding branch. It looked perilously unsafe, and as if the least touch would turn the whole thing over; but Harry Russell seemed to understand that they were doing their best for him, and was prepared to help all he could.

Whenever the moon came out Slim Jim flung the log as far as he could, and they watched the current bear it down towards the tree. Again and again the log missed it, and again and again he drew it back and tried once more. The watchers grew wild with anxiety and there grew up in them a very friendly feeling for this man, who, though he was outwardly their enemy, was doing his very best for them, and they forgot that but for him and his mates they would have been in no such plight.

Again and again Slim Jim threw his log into the creek, and again and again he drew it out, till the sweat poured from his face in spite of the cold, wintry night; but at last all four gave a simultaneous shout of triumph, for by the cold beams of the moon they saw the log with the rope attached drifting down the very centre of the current straight for the half submerged tree.

Then there was a long wait. It seemed as if the moon was never coming out again, and Kitty began to feel she had lived through an hundred years. Was the moon never coming out again? And before it did come the man holding the rope gave a shout of joy, a shout as genuine as if he had not been helping to raid her house and home.

"He's got it! he's got it! Lord Almighty! he's got it!" and he started to run down the creek again.

The rest was simple enough, and almost before she could realise what was happening, her husband, dripping, half drowned, and more than half insensible, was in her arms again.

Then and not till then did their companion remember that he was an outlaw and carried his life in his hands. He drew his pistol and stood over the man over whom his wife was inarticulately rejoicing.

"Bail up," he said somewhat sullenly.

Harry Russell looked at him in surprise.

"Is that who you are?" he said. "Well, you've saved my life, anyhow. I heard the Night-Owl's gang had got the place. You—you?" he turned to his wife anxiously.

"Oh, they're all right," growled Slim Jim. "I warn't goin' to have them touched, an' I ain't goin' to harm you, neither, if you come along quiet."

"If it wasn't for you I should be at the bottom of the creek," said Russell, taking his wife's cold little hand in his, "and I'm

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infinitely obliged to you, whoever you may be."

Then they made for the brilliantly lighted dining-room, and Slim Jim silently pointed to an arm-chair beside the fire. Russell looked at his wringing wet clothes, but the bushranger paid no attention.

"You sit there an' don't stir," said he, "an' the women'd better not go near you. If they do, or if you stir, well, if I don't shoot, the Night-Owl will. We'll be gone soon, sir," he added civilly enough, "an' we can't afford to chuck away our chances."

Russell could hardly help smiling as he stretched himself over the bright fire.

"At least give me a nip," said he, and Slim Jim poured him out a generous bumper of his own brandy.

Then he left them to themselves, and Nora strolled outside into the garden again, while Kitty and her sister-in-law, wearied out with excitement and anxiety, sat down on the sofa and listened as people in a dream to the men wrangling in the next room. They were evidently discussing the arrival of Russell, the best way to get more money out of him, and the necessity for clearing out as soon as possible. If he knew they were here, others probably did, and the police would not long allow the floods to be a bar. Still, they evidently thought themselves safe for some little time, and Russell himself, though he could hear every word they said through the thin partition, was actually so weary he fell asleep while they were discussing his fate. He knew what they did not, that the police were already warned and would be at Gnotuk before morning.

After a little Nora came back again, dripping wet and trailing pools of water on to the carpet. Her lips were blue and her teeth were chattering, but her eyes were dancing.

"There's somebody out there, sure," she whispered. "They've got wind av ut. There's a brave bhoy creepin' along by the shed there, an'——"

Mrs. Russell sprang to her feet and Nora promptly put her hand on her face.

"There," she said aloud, "the pigs is all right, and so's the ram. My word! but 'tis he have the will av his own, an' 'tis in the draring-room ye'll have to be keepin' him if the wathers rise any higher."

The bushrangers were coming back, and Nora's information was evidently for their benefit.

"Mrs. Russell," said the Night-Owl, looking at the sleeping man, "we haven't near enough money. We've got a gun and some cartridges, but we must have some more of the ready, or know the reason why."

Kitty shivered and trembled. How near was this unknown man?

"You've looked everywhere," she said; "you must see for yourselves I have nothing more."

"You've got to get it, then," said the Night-Owl, "or——" and he raised his pistol and pointed it direct at Russell, sleeping as calmly as if his house were not in the possession of the worst gang that ever hid in the hills of the North-Eastern district.

Kitty thought his doom was sealed, and gave a shriek that went wailing out into the night air and startled her husband into wakefulness. Slim Jim started forward, and then, to the surprise of everyone, a shot rang out and buried itself in the wall just above the Night-Owl's head.

The effect was instantaneous. In a moment Slim Jim had dashed at the lamp and put it out. There was a splashing in the water outside, and the four bushrangers scuttled like frightened rabbits out of the room, followed by Russell, wide awake now.

Where they went to Kitty hardly troubled, for she heard her husband's voice.

"That's right, Sells, let your men surround the house and we've got 'em now like rats in a trap."

"Hark to 'em," said Nora under her breath, "the spunk av 'em, an' them on'y two, for the love av God!"

The splashing outside grew louder; the bushrangers were evidently thinking discretion the better part of valour. And then there came some shouts and cries, and then, after what seemed an interminable time to the waiting women, the master's voice called to them to light up, for they had got one of the beggars, though the others had made good their escape in the rain and darkness.

Nora lighted the lamp, and there entered Harry Russell and a tall, grave, middle-aged man in the uniform of a sergeant of the Mounted Police, dragging between them, ragged, wet, dilapidated and miserable, the bushranger they had known as Slim Jim.

Russell's dismay was quite comical when the light fell upon the face of his prisoner.

"By the living Jingo!" he cried perplexedly, "what am I to do now?"

"We'd have got the lot," said the trooper calmly, "if I could only have waited a little. The rest'll be up in a couple of hours. I thought I'd better come along and keep an eye open, in case you needed me."

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"Lucky for me you did," said Russell gratefully; "but that wasn't this chap's fault."

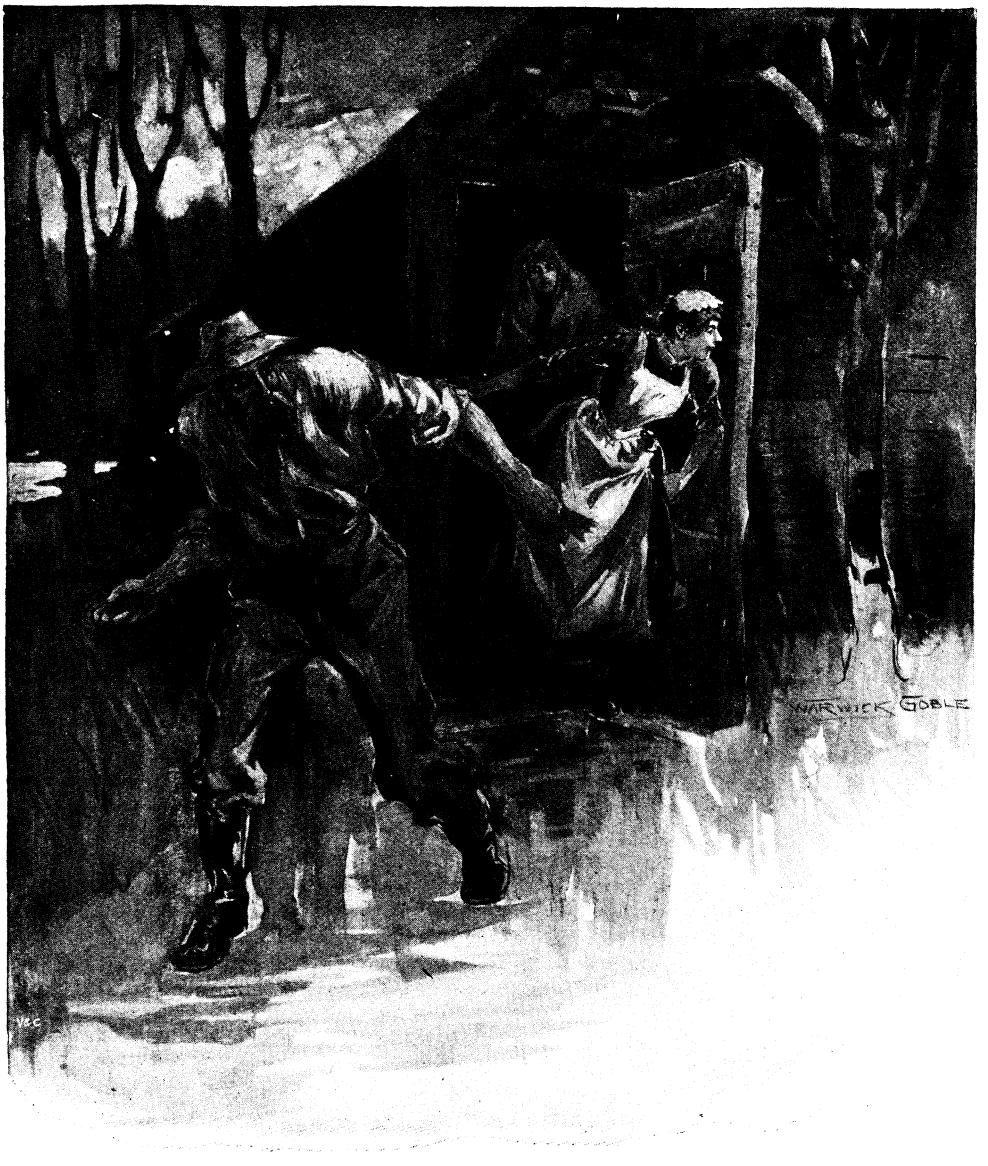
"He'll have the chance of meditating on his good behaviour," said the sergeant.

"Oh, but Harry, he was good to us!" put in his wife.

crying, whether from relief at their escape, or pity for the bushranger, she could hardly have told.

"I was a gen'lman to you, Mrs. Russell," put in Slim Jim wistfully.

"Yes, you were, you were. Make it as



"He slipped out of the doorway."

"What's the penalty for this little amusement, sergeant?"

"Robbery under arms?" said the sergeant laconically—he was a man of few words—"hanging."

"Oh, dear, oh, dear!" and Kitty burst out

easy for him as you can, sergeant. If it hadn't been for him my husband wouldn't have been here now, and I don't know what would have become of all of us. He kept the rest in order."

"He had no business here at all," said the

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sergeant grimly. "We've taken him red-handed, and I guess he'll have to suffer for the company he keeps."

They took him outside, and Nettie turned to her sister-in-law.

"We can't allow that man to hang, Kitty. Whatever should we have done without him? Harry mustn't interfere, and the policeman isn't in a fit state to judge. I'm going to take the matter into my own hands. Now, all you've got to do is to lend me Nora and see after supper yourself, so she won't be missed."

"Yes, yes, of course. Give him a chance if you can, Annette. My own mare's in the stable."

They put Slim Jim in an outhouse, tied his hands and feet, and left him there in the darkness to meditate on his fate. The stones under him were cold and damp; he was bruised all over, and he was so weary he almost felt it a relief that an end had been put to his career, however summarily. What would become of him? He had certainly saved Russell's life, he had done what he could for the women under the circumstances; but, after all, what was that in the eye of the law? He had joined himself to the Night-Owl. Could anything he had done since count against that? He doubted it. And James Brock bitterly cursed the day he had ever had anything to do with Pete Aitken.

Somebody was fumbling with the staple of the door—somebody who was afraid of making a noise; and then it seemed to him he heard the swish of petticoats across the floor.

"Sure, Slim Jim, are ye there?" asked a voice he recognised as that of Nora the housemaid.

"Hush, hush!" said Miss Russell, out of the darkness. Then they paused and lighted a candle, and the two faces stood out in the circle of light. The candle flickered and guttered in the breeze, but it looked to the well-nigh hopeless man as if they meant kindly by him.

"I believe you really did your best for us," said Nettie Russell. "We all think that, and we don't like to think of you hanging; so we'll give you a chance, only for goodness sake don't tell anyone it was us, and do try and get away from such bad company."

Slim Jim fairly gasped.

"If we loose you, could you take a horse and get away?"

"My colonial! You try me!"

"Don't kill anybody," said Nettie earnestly. "It's dreadful to think of letting you out to kill anybody."

"I won't. I never did 'cept once, an' that was in fair fight. He might ha' killed me."

Nettie blew out the candle now they had taken their bearings.

"Faith, ma'am," said Nora, "ye'd best be quick. It 'ud be bad for the likes av you to be ketched here. Give me the knife."

Nettie handed it to her and she went down on her knees and promptly cut the ropes that bound his hands and feet. Slim Jim sprang to his feet.

"Quick!" said Nettie, "quick! There's a horse at the corner of the stable. Keep along the top of the ridge and the flood won't hurt you much. And, oh, do be honest for the future."

"I will, lady, I will, if ever I can get clear of them chaps, I will, an' I'll always remember how good you was to me."

He slipped out of the doorway and was lost to them in the darkness and rain.

At the kitchen door Kitty met them—Kitty, frightened out of her wits at what they had done.

"Now go back, Kitty," said Nettie, taking things into her own hands. "Nora, get into dry things as soon as possible. I'd do it again if it was to be done. I should never have had any peace if that young man were hanged, and he'll get away right enough now. They will never know how it was done.'

And they never did, not for certain, though Sergeant Sells, talking matters over with his superior officer, was shrewdly of opinion that the women of the Gnotuk household could have thrown some light on the escape of Slim Jim if they had cared to.

"But," said he with a sigh, "we ain't got anything to go on; and there really is no accounting for women any way."

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A NIGHT RIDE IN THE T.P.O.

By John M. Carlisle.

Illustrated from Special Photographs by Reginald Cocks.

PROBABLY no department of our vast and intricate Civil Service is so roundly denounced by the great British public as that which controls our postal arrangements. It is taken as a matter of course that a letter, which is posted in London to-night, should be delivered to the addressee in Plymouth at the very latest by midday to-morrow, without even a passing thought being given to the fact that, after its posting in the pillar box, the letter has to pass through a multitude of hands before it is delivered by the postman at its destination.

By the courteous permission of the Postmaster-General I was recently able to make a journey on behalf of the Windsor Magazine in the T.P.O., which, being interpreted, signifies the Travelling Post Office, attached to the mail train travelling between London, Bristol, Plymouth, and Penzance, and the experience gave me a highly interesting insight into the working of one of the most important ramifications of our gigantic postal system.

MAKING UP THE MAILS AT THE STATION POST OFFICE.

It is barely eight o'clock in the evening when I reach Paddington, the terminus of the ubiquitous Great Western Railway. Although the West of England mail train does not leave before nine o'clock, the platform has already assumed a scene of subdued bustle. Presently the train is slowly shunted into the station, and the sorters, who have to commence their duties at eight o'clock, having arrived, board the mail in hot haste and set to work immediately; for their task is a protracted one, and the sooner they can commence operations upon the contents of the rapidly accumulating mail bags, the greater is the possibility of obtaining a little respite later on.

Mail van after mail van rattles impetuously into the station yard, loaded to its utmost capacity with heavy consignments of sacks containing packages and correspondence for the various destinations along the route traversed by the mail train. These are transferred with lightning rapidity to migratory trucks and wheeled away to the T.P.O. The majority of the bags received from St. Martin's-le-Grand are "direct bags"—that is, at the G.P.O. their contents have already been sorted and placed in separate sacks, labelled on the exterior with the corresponding title of their destination, thus obviating a further elaborate sorting in the T.P.O.

Amid all this hurry, scurry, and whirl of excitement in discharging the bags from one conveyance to load them upon another, one cannot help thinking that occasionally bags, especially the small ones, must inevitably go

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astray. But the checks and counterchecks observed render such a contingency impossible without the officials being almost immediately apprised of the fact. The Post Office is evidently a staunch advocate of the old-world principle, "three times fair." At the G.P.O., as each bag issues from the sorting room, to be embarked upon the mail van, the title of the destination imprinted on the bag is entered upon a special official form. This invoice of the sacks despatched from the General to meet the mail train is sent to the supervising overseer in charge of that T.P.O., and as each sack is embarked upon the train, one calls out the destination while another checks it upon the official list, and a final check is made by the overseer himself.

The clock hands are rapidly advancing towards the hour for the departure of the train, and the maze of loaded trucks of mails becomes more intricate and bewildering than ever. Yet, owing to that rigid observance of method and order, they are transferred to the T.P.O. without any undue excitement or fluster in an incredibly short space of time.

The two powerful engines, "Westward Ho" and "Hurricane," are now coupled on, panting and throbbing like greyhounds straining at the leash. The semaphore has dropped, and just as the last bag is transferred into the carriage the guard waves his green light, the engines give forth the reverberating whistle, and almost imperceptibly the heavily loaded mail train glides out of the station just as the neighbouring clocks are booming forth the hour of nine above London's traffic.

MR. WILLIAM KING.

Overseer in charge of the West of England Night Mail: for forty years attached to the T.P.O., and for thirty-eight years on the Night Mail.

Photo by Denney & Co., Teignmouth.

Over four hundred sacks of mails have been received to-night from the G.P.O., though the overseer informs me that this is only an average cargo. They are stacked right up to the roof, and the direct bags are set upon side ready for disembarkation when their destinations are reached by the train.

On this particular mail the T.P.O. consists of two carriages, each 46 feet in length and connected with a gangway. One is the post office proper, where the sorting is conducted, and the other car is utilised for the temporary storage of the mail-bags prior to their being required by

THE EXTERIOR OF THE T.P.O., SHOWING NET LOWERED AND POUCHES EXTENDED ON THE STANDARDS.

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the sorters, with the exception of one end which is devoted to the sorting of parcels. Down one side are ranged pigeon-holes above the sorting tables, while along the other side of the car extend rows of pegs upon each of which are depended a number of sacks inscribed with the titles of certain districts, and into which the letters for such districts are consigned as rapidly as they are sorted. Of late years the parcels post traffic has increased tremendously, and large consignments of parcels are now conveyed in the T.P.O.. Yet in some cases, notably to Brighton and Oxford, many parcels are still carried by road. The carriages are abundantly illumined with oil and gas lamps, and the walls are padded for the protection of the sorters.

One of the most salient characteristics of the T.P.O. is the wonderful mechanical contrivance devised for receiving and dropping the mails while the train is travelling at full speed. On one side of the carriage is a large collapsible net extending from the roof to the floor, closed on all sides except that facing the engine, and projecting, when open, between two and three feet from the side of the car. This is for receiving the mail bags. At the two bottom corners of the doorways are fixed small iron standards, about two feet in length, moving upon a pivot. When a mail bag is adjusted to the upper end, the weight causes the standard to assume a horizontal position, which is maintained until the bags are detached by concussion with the stationary receiving net by the side of the permanent way, when, through the medium of a strong spring, the standard immediately flies back to its original perpendicular position. In our illustration the apparatus for receiving and dropping the mail bags is shown ready for working, the net being lowered and the standards extended.

At various points along the route traversed by the mail similar apparati to those attached to the T.P.O. are stationed, only in these cases the net is of much larger proportions. Our illustration on page 63 shows this stationary net in position, while the pouches of mails are suspended from the standards awaiting the passage of the mail train with its lowered net.

It is a beautiful moonlight night, and the atmosphere being exceptionally clear, there is every prospect of a fine run. The operator in charge of the apparatus is busily employed in packing up the mails that have to be dropped within the leather pouch at the first apparatus station, which is at Southall, the sixth station after leaving Paddington. To all intents and purposes this is only a subordinate task, but, nevertheless, there is a right and a wrong way of packing the bags, and many have come to grief through negligence on the part of the operator in packing them within the leather pouch. This latter receptacle consists of four overlapping flaps of thick, stout leather, securely fastened in each direction by straps, the whole being suspended from the standard by a stout, heavy thong of five or six thicknesses of leather, about eighteen inches in length, and pierced with what is called a "pin-hole" at the upper end to adjust it upon the standard.

Westbourne Park, Acton, Ealing, and Castle Hill are passed in rapid succession, and having practically cleared the great Metropolis we are now bowling merrily along at about forty miles an hour. The operator has completed his task of packing the pouches that have to be dropped at Southall, and now awaits the moment when he shall set the apparatus. In such a hive of activity as the T.P.O., where every moment is of inconceivable value, no time can be spared to watch the various stations and landmarks, so the sorters have to rely upon their hearing to keep them informed of the exact section of line over which they are travelling at any given moment. The men are guided, indeed, almost entirely by sound. The various peculiar rattles caused by the train running through a station or cutting, under or over a bridge, are known to them, and they can tell you the whereabouts of the train as correctly as if they were following its course with the eye. For instance, running into Acton station the line is bounded for a considerable distance by a stone wall, which creates a certain noise as the train rushes along, giving way to another distinctly different sound as the train whirls through the station.

We are now approaching Hanwell Station. The apparatus operator observes the Asylum, with its dominant clock tower, through the station, over a bridge spanning the road, past a parapet bounding the line, and after passing the distant signal to Hanwell Station, extends the standards from which the mail bags in the pouches are suspended, and depresses a lever which lowers the net. When this lever is lowered it automatically rings an electric bell whose tintinnabulation continues until the lever is released and the net is thrown out of gear. The object of this is to warn all the other occupants of the carriage that the net is open and they must

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not, except on their own peril, pass the open doorway until the bell ceases ringing. The operator stands by and in a few moments with an instantaneous crash the extended pouches vanish and three loaded pouches are shot into the net and rebound across the carriage as if impelled from a cannon. Directly the pouches are received the lever controlling the net is released, throwing the net out of position.

The operator of this apparatus holds a very responsible position. He must take great care that the correct mail bags are packed within the pouches. Occasionally the wrong bag is inserted, and he very soon receives an official reprimand from the Chief Office for his inadvertence. Then the net must be lowered and the pouches extended at the psychological moment, in default of which either disaster will follow or the pouches be missed. In many places where the apparatus station is near a railway bridge the width from the side of the carriage to the parapet of the bridge is not sufficient to admit the train passing with net and pouches extended in position. And if the net were to collide with such an obstacle, either the bridge would be swept away or the side of the carriage torn out and the train consequently wrecked. A short time ago, during the journey of the up mail to London, the operator lowered the net too soon when approaching the apparatus station at Southall, with the result that it came into violent contact with a bridge, smashing the net and discharging several bricks into the interior of the carriage.

Every night the supervising overseer receives a budget of official correspondence, which demands a certain amount of his attention during the journey. One of the most important communications is a list announcing the locality of her Majesty's men-o'-war around the coast. This list is sent to the overseer from the Admiralty, *via* the G.P.O., regularly every evening. The majority of the letters for "Jack" are simply addressed "H.M.S. *Majestic*," or whatever the name of the vessel may be; so that by simply referring to this list the sorter is able to at once determine the exact whereabouts of that particular battleship, and continues sending all such letters to that destination until fresh notification has been received announcing that the ship has exchanged her station. By this means the

INTERIOR OF THE T.P.O. SORTING VAN.

The device for delivering the pouches is shown outside the doorway.

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roving sailor is able to receive his correspondence as regularly and as expeditiously as his residential brother on land.

The innumerable brickyards and kilns, over which hangs a soft, blue, filmy pall of semi-transparent smoke, herald Slough. In the post office the sorters are bustling, as the first T.P.O. bag—that is, the first mail bag containing letters sorted in the T.P.O.—is made up and despatched by the apparatus six hundred yards beyond the railway station. The operator inquires if all is ready, and being answered in the affirmative, ties and seals the bag—no bag containing mails is

POUCHES OPEN, SHOWING THE METHOD OF PACKING THE MAIL BAGS.

allowed to pass out of the T.P.O., or, in fact, any other post office, under any pretence whatever, without first being sealed—and packs it within the pouch. The dual whistle of the locomotives announces Langley Station, which is passed with a rattle and a roar. In a few minutes the operator espies the circle of lights skirting the village just before Slough Station. The noise caused by the train rattling by two signal boxes after passing through the station and over one bridge warns him that it is time to lower and extend. In this case the operation has to be executed rather quickly, owing to the short distance between the bridge and the apparatus station itself.

Presently the tall, black chimneys silhouetted against the clear sky announce our approach to the town of seeds and biscuits, and a few seconds later we draw up at the station, our first authorised stopping place since leaving London. We have had a good, punctual fifty minutes' run from town. Here we form a junction with the South-Western T.P.O., carrying the mails received from Jersey, Guernsey, Southampton, Portsmouth, and Basingstoke. Our three minutes' advertised stay has elapsed, but as yet the train has not arrived, nor, in fact, is even signalled. Her Majesty's mails, like time and tide, however, wait for no man, and punctually at 9.53 we are off again. Various reasons may be advanced as to why the South-Western mail is late, but it was subsequently discovered that the South-Western Railway Company's boats carrying the Channel Islands' mails had encountered rough weather in the Channel, thus arriving late at Southampton. When this overdue mail train arrives at Reading and finds that we have gone, the mails will proceed direct to London and catch the fast train for Plymouth, leaving Paddington at midnight, the letters being delivered by the second delivery at Plymouth, instead of by the first, as they would have been had the T.P.O. junction been effected at Reading.

At Cholsey and Moulsford, where the next exchange by the apparatus is effected, four pouches are dropped, two from each doorway, as the standards only carry one pouch each, while four bags are received in two receipts—that is, two pouches are received by the net from the first apparatus standards, and two more from another set of standards about one hundred yards beyond the first, the same condition applying to the stationary apparatus standards beside the railway line as to those upon the T.P.O.—*i.e.*, they are only adapted for carrying one pouch each.

Outside Didcot Junction we are delayed for a minute by adverse signals, but soon we pull leisurely up at the platform. Didcot is an important station for the mails, as being the junction of the West of England and the North of England Great Western main lines; here all the mail bags from Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Shewsbury, and other Mid-

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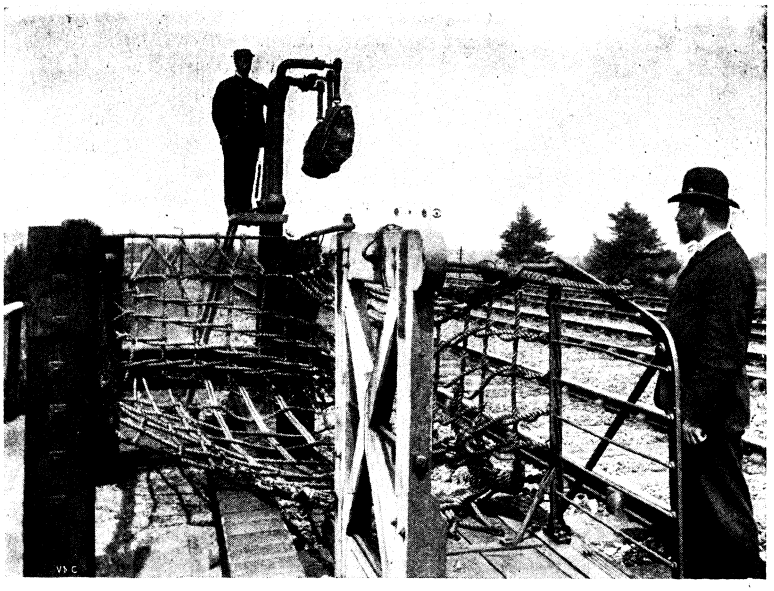

"READY!"

Pouches adjusted on the standards and the net set ready for the approaching mail train.

land towns, for Western towns, are embarked. Although they constitute a large pile, the indefatigable efforts of the sorters soon transfer them from the platform to the T.P.O. It is very amusing to watch the keen rivalry exhibited between the postal officials and the railway servants in the expeditious embarkation of the mails and luggage. If the postal officials succeed in entraining all the mail bags before the porters transport the luggage, and the train is at all late in starting, the mail is entered up in the log book as having "been delayed by the company's parcels," while, if it be *vice versa*, the company are exultant, as they can then show adequate evidence, when the Post Office demands an explanation of any unpunctuality, that the train was detained at such and such a station through the mails.

A forty-five minutes run from Didcot brings us to Swindon, the halfway station between London and Bristol. At this junction the first despatch to South Wales, comprising thirty-three bags to-night, is sent out, the mail for that part of the country travelling *via* Stroud and Gloucester. The bags received are from Gloucester, Marlborough, Stroud, and Birmingham. After leaving Swindon the mail has a clear run to Bath, only stopping at Chippenham.

Bath is reached at 11.46. The run to-night has been an exceptionally fine one, and we have reached this historic old Roman city two minutes before the advertised time, notwithstanding the fact that we were two minutes late at Didcot and Swindon. A transfer is made here of several bags to meet the up mail to London, leaving Plymouth 8.25 p.m., due at Bath 1.3 a.m.

"ALL OVER!"

This picture shows the double operation effected by the mail while travelling at sixty-five miles an hour. The bags in both cases are seen dropping into the nets.

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During the whole of the journey from Paddington to Bath the supervising overseer has been busily engaged in answering the official correspondence. These communications are despatched in the transfer bag from here, and his replies will be lying upon the tables of the different departments of the G.P.O. from which they were sent out this evening, before seven o'clock to-morrow morning. Mis-sent letters—that is, letters which, through the oversight of the sorters at the G.P.O. or some other post office *en route*, have been slipped into the bags for the districts served by the West of England mail, whereas their destinations are really in some other parts of the country—are also sent on their correct journey from Bath. During our run to-night some fifteen such letters have been discovered. The names and addresses upon these letters, together with the name of the office from which they have been sent, and the time upon the date stamp, are carefully recorded upon an official form, which is afterwards sent to, and retained by, the chief officer at St. Martin's-le-Grand, so that in case any dispute or complaint about a delayed letter should be made to the Postmaster-General, he can immediately determine where, in what manner, and how many hours, a letter was delayed.

"GONE!"

The apparatus reversed so as not to strike a passing train, and the net closed.

At Bristol twenty-five bags are thrown out, most of which comprise the second South Wales despatch. Mails that have been brought down from Newcastle-on-Tyne, York, Huddersfield, Leeds, Leicester, Derby, and Birmingham, by the Midland trains, which also run into Bristol, as well as those from Manchester, Aberdare, Cardiff, and the other Welsh centres served by the Great Western Railway, are received.

The sorters are now completing the sorting of the letters for Weston-super-Mare, to be dropped in six pouches by means of the apparatus. At Christmas time, the overseer informs me, when they have five sorting carriages comprising the T.P.O., they drop as many as eight or ten pouches at one time at this point, the total weight of which may be roughly assessed at about five hundred pounds. This will give some idea of what the strength of the nets must be to withstand the concussion from such an enormous weight suddenly arrested while travelling at nearly sixty miles an hour. We rattle through Puxton and the operator rings up the two sorters in the sorting tender. Presently the circle of the lights of the town betrays our rapid approach to the popular West of England seaside resort, Weston-super-Mare. The mail does not pass through the station of Weston-super-Mare itself, as that town is not situate on the direct main line. Puxton station passed, the operators observe five bridges. After passing under the fifth, the whole six pouches are extended and the net also lowered, for three pouches are received. With a terrific report the whole six pouches disappear, and three others thunder into the carriage.

Brief halts are made at Bridgwater, Taunton, and Exeter, another official boarding the T.P.O. at the former station to assist in the sorting of the parcels.

The care observed to prevent the miscarriage of registered letters and packages is

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remarkable, and it seems impossible, in view of the infinite precautions, that one should go astray. One sorter, who in point of rank among the sorters is next to the overseer in position, is solely detailed for the work of sorting these packages. When a mail bag containing any registered correspondence is despatched from a post office, the postmaster of that office records the full name and address inscribed upon each package upon an official form, or, as it is vernacularly called, a "letter bill," which he places in the bag. When the sorter unseals the bag in the T.P.O., the first thing for which he searches is this official form. He hands the packages together with the bill, which is really an invoice of the registered packages in that bag, to the registered letter sorter. This official checks the list to see that all are intact, tears the docket in halves, one of which, bearing his signature, is returned to the sorter, signifying that he has safely received so many registered packages as per "letter bill" from the sorter who opened the incoming mail bag, thus relieving that official of any responsibility regarding those packages. This hand to hand check is infallible. The dockets are afterwards returned to, and preserved by, the G.P.O. for three years, so that in the event of any dispute arising over a registered letter the authorities can easily find where the discrepancy, if any, occurred. This effectual record has been the means of upsetting more than one legal case where difficulties have arisen over registered letters, for, together with the other receipt docket issued from the post office to the person who despatched the letter, and the docket signed by the addressee when it was delivered by the postman, the Postmaster-General has been able to trace the journey of the package from the moment it was posted until delivered.

When the mail left Exeter, the inspector having a few minutes to spare, I was able to have a short chat with him upon some of his experiences while travelling with her Majesty's mail. The preternaturally sage are very eloquent of the many evils attending habitual night work, owing to its being diametrically opposed to the laws of Nature, but their tenets are rudely shaken by the admission of Mr. King, the supervising overseer, who, during his forty years' service, has spent no less than thirty-eight of them on the night mail. "Yes, I can assure you," he replied in answer to my question, "that working in the T.P.O. in the sixties was a terrible hardship. The carriages were short in length as well as dwarfish in height, and owing to the fact that bogie wheels were not then in vogue, the vibration was intolerable. For twenty-one years I was connected with the T.P.O. running from Bangor to Crewe, Leeds, Huddersfield, and various Midland towns.

"The marked improvement in the apparatus for receiving the mail bags is beyond comprehension. True, at that time we had the nets, but they were very crude in construction. We had to lower them the best way we could, and when we caught the pouches we had to haul them into the interior of the carriage by sheer physical force. Now the operator has simply to push down a lever, a feat which does not require much exertion."

Newton Abbot! This is the journey's end, so far as sorting is concerned. The

POSTMEN LEAVING APPARATUS WITH MAILS DROPPED FROM T.P.O.

piles of loaded mail bags have been gradually reduced until only a few now remain. The overseer and the whole of the sorting staff, with the exception of two sorters, leave the mail train here. The apparatus is manipu-

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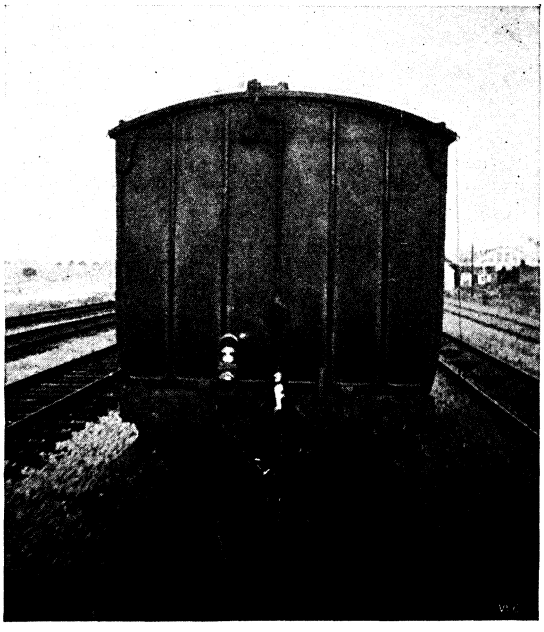
lated only once or twice between Newton Abbot and Plymouth, where another party of sorters board the one carriage that proceeds to Penzance, the journey to which town from Paddington is too long for one party of men, occupying as it does a spell of duty lasting almost twelve hours, Penzance not being reached till 7.25 a.m. We arrived at Plymouth at 4.17 a.m., only two minutes late, which speaks volumes for the splendid system and engines of the Great Western Railway.

The return journey by the up mail, leaving Plymouth at 8.25 p.m. that evening, accomplished the journey under less propitious circumstances, being over three-quarters of an hour late in running into Paddington. The work is exactly the same, though, of course, on the up journey the approach to an apparatus is indicated by altogether different observation marks. Again, London being divided into seven postal districts, separate bags are set apart in the T.P.O. for the correspondence relating to those districts, instead of being relegated into a number of bags simply marked "London," and afterwards sorted out into the districts at the G.P.O. The sorters, instead of having to deal practically with only the postal districts along the Great Western route between Paddington and Penzance, have now to sort letters for all the towns, villages and hamlets from John o' Groats to Land's End.

Some idea of the infinite trouble taken by the G.P.O. to ensure punctual delivery of the letters may be gleaned from the fact that if the train be more than ten minutes late in reaching Paddington, the bags containing mails for Colchester, Ipswich, etc., are conveyed from Paddington to Liverpool Street, the terminus of the Great Eastern Railway, by cab, to catch the T.P.O. leaving the latter station at 5.10 a.m. The cabman receives half-a-crown for his services, and woe betide a Jehu if he refuses to carry her Majesty's mails when requested. A short while ago a cabman, for some reason or other, refused to carry the bags. Remonstrance was useless, and no more was said by the mail overseer, but he took the obstinate cabman's number, and forwarded his complaint of number so-and-so's refusal to carry the mail bags to the G.P.O. Great was the cabman's consternation two or three days later when he found himself debarred from entering Paddington Station, a rule which remained in operation for some weeks, during which time the cabman had ample opportunity of reflecting as to whether it is an advisable policy to offend the Government.

As we steamed into Paddington, and scarcely before the train had come to a standstill, the impatient road mail vans were being loaded with sacks, and in less than ten minutes some two or three hundred bags had been deported from the mail train and were being rapidly whirled away to the G.P.O. and railway termini. Verily, the working of the postal service, through the strict observance of method and order, is wonderful. The various ramifications run as smoothly and as truly as the cogwheels of a machine. As I stepped out of the T.P.O. at a quarter to five that morning and watched the mail carriages being shunted into a siding to await their call of duty at nine o'clock that evening, I came to the conclusion, after what I had seen "behind the scenes," that the Post Office, far from being the inept, badly mobilised, and negligent organisation that it is sometimes opined to be, is one of the most marvellous institutions in the world.



"THE END."

Taken from the guard's "slip" coach just after the slip. The van before us is the mail travelling on at full speed after our release.

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JOAN OF THE SWORD.

By S. R. Crockett,*

Author of "The Raiders," "The Lilac Sunbonnet," "The Red Axe," "The Stickit Minister," etc., etc.

Illustrated by Frank Richards.

CHAPTER I.

THE HALL OF THE GUARD.

LOUD rang the laughter in the hall of the men-at-arms at Castle Kernsberg. There had come an embassy from the hereditary Princess of Plassenburg, recently established upon the throne of her ancestors, to the Duchess Joan of Hohenstein, ruler of that cluster of hill statelets which is called collectively Masurenland, and which includes, besides Hohenstein, the original Eagle's Eyrie, Kernswald also, and Marienfeld.

Above, in the hall of audience, the ambassador, one Leopold von Dessauer, a great lord and most learned councillor of state, sat alone with the young Duchess. They were eating of the baked meats and drinking the good Rhenish up there. But, after all, it was much merrier down below with Werner von Orseln, Alt Pikker, Peter Balta, and John of Thorn, though what they ate was mostly but plain ox-flesh, and their drink the strong ale native to the hill lands, which is called Wendish mead.

"Get you down, Captains Jorian and Boris," the young Duchess had commanded, looking very handsome and haughty in the pride of her twenty-one years, her eight strong castles, and her two thousand men ready to rise at her word; "down to the hall, where my officers send round the wassail. If they do not treat you well, e'en come up and tell it to me."

"Good!" had responded the two soldiers of the Princess of Plassenburg, turning them about as if they had been hinged on the same stick, and starting forward with precisely the same stiff hitch from the halt, they made for the door.

"But stay," Joan of Hohenstein had said, ere they reached it, "here are a couple of rings. My father left me one or two such. Fit them upon your fingers, and when you return give them to the maidens of your choice. Is there by chance such a one, Captain Jorian, left behind you at Plassenburg?"

"Aye, madam," said Jorian, directing his left eye, as he stood at attention, a little slantwise at his companion.

"What is her name?"

"Gretchen is her name," quoth the soldier.

"And yours, Captain Boris?"

The second automaton, a little slower of tongue than his companion, hesitated a moment.

"Speak up," said his comrade, in an undergrowl; "say 'Katrin.'"

"Katrin!" thundered Captain Boris, with bluff apparent honesty.

"It is well," said the Duchess Joan; "I think no less of a sturdy soldier for being somewhat shamefaced as to the name of his sweetheart. Here is a ring apiece which will not shame your maidens in far Plassenburg, as you walk with them under the lime trees, or buy ribbons for them in the booths about the Minster walls."

The donor looked at the rings again. She espied the letters of a posy upon them.

"Ha!" she cried, "Captain Boris, what said you was the name of your betrothed?"

"Good Lord!" muttered Boris lowly to himself, "did I not tell the woman even now?—Gretchen!"

"Hut, you fool!" Jorian's undergrowl came to his ear, "Katrin—not Gretchen; Gretchen is mine."

"I mean Katrin, my Lady Duchess," said Boris, putting a bold face on the mistake.

The young mistress of the castle smiled. "Thou art a strange lover," she said, "thus to forget the name of thy mistress. But here is a ring with a K writ large upon it, which will serve for thy Katherina. And here, Captain Jorian, is one with a G scrolled in Gothic, which thou wilt doubtless place with pride upon the finger of Mistress Gretchen among the rose gardens of Plassenburg."

"Good!" said Jorian and Boris, making their bows together; "we thank your most gracious highness."

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"Back out, you hulking brute!" the undertone came again from Jorian; "she will be asking us for their surnames if we bide a moment longer. Now then, we are safe through the door; right about, Boris, and thank Heaven she had not time for another question, or we were men undone!"

And with their rings upon their little fingers the two burly captains went down the narrow stair of Castle Kernsberg, nudging each other jovially in the dark places as if they had again been men-at-arms and no captains, as in the old days before the death of Karl the Usurper and the coming back of the legitimate Princess Helene into her rights.

Being arrived at the hall beneath they soon found themselves the centre of a hospitable circle. Gruff, bearded Wendish men were these officers of the young Duchess; not a butterfly youngling nor a courtly carpet knight among them, but men tanned like shipmen of the Baltic, soldiers mostly who had served under her father Henry, foraging upon occasion as far as the Mark in one direction and into Bor-Russia in the other, men grounded and compacted after the hearts of Jorian and Boris.

It was small wonder that among such congenial society the ex-men-at-arms found themselves presently very much at home. Scarcely were they seated when Jorian began to brag of the gift the Duchess had given him for the maiden of his troth.

"And Boris here, that hulking cobold, that Hans Klapper upon the housetops, had well-nigh spoiled the jest; for when her ladyship asked him a second time in her sweet voice for the name of his 'betrothed,' he must needs lay his tongue to 'Gretchen,' instead of 'Katrin,' as he had done at the first!"

Then all suddenly the bearded, burly officers of the Duchess Joan looked at each other with a little scared expression on their faces, through which gradually glimmered up a certain grim amusement. Werner von Orseln, the eldest and gravest of all, glanced round the full circle of his mess. Then he looked back at the two captains of the embassy guard of Plassenburg with a pitying glance.

"And you lied about your sweethearts to the Duchess Joan?" he said.

"Ha, ha! Yes! I trow yes," quoth Jorian jovially. Wine may be dear, but this ring will pay the sweets of many a night!"

"Ha, ha! It will, will it?" said Werner, the chief captain, grimly.

"Aye, truly," echoed Boris, the mead beginning to work nuttily under his steel cap, "when we melt this—ha, ha!—Katrin's jewel, we'll quaff many a beaker. The Rhenish shall flow. And Peg and Moll and Elisabet shall be there—yes, and many a good fellow——"

"Shut the door!" quoth Werner, the chief captain, at this point. "Sit down, gentlemen!"

But Jorian and Boris were not to be so easily turned aside.

"Call in the ale-drawer—the tapster, the pottler, the over-cellarer, whatever you call him. For we would have more of his vintage. Why, is this a night of jewels, and shall we not melt them? We may chance to get another for a second mouthful of lies to-morrow morning. A good duchess as ever was—a soft princess, a princess most gullible in this of yours, gentlemen of the Eagle's Nest, kerns of Kernsdorf!"

"Sit down," said Werner yet more gravely. "Captains Jorian and Boris, you do not seem to know that you are no longer in Plassenburg. The broom bush does not keep the cow betwixt Kernsberg and Hohenstein. Here are no tables of Karl the Miller's Son to hamper our liege mistress. Do you know that you have lied to her and made a jest of it?"

"Aye," cried Jorian, holding his ring high; "a sweet, easy maid, this of yours, as ever was cozened. An easy service yours must be. Lord! I could feather my nest well inside a year—one short year with such a mistress would do the business. Why, she will believe anything!"

"So," said Werner von Orseln grimly, "you think so, do you, Captains Boris and Jorian, of the embassy staff? Well, listen!"

He spoke very slowly, leaning towards them and punctuating his meaning upon the palm of his left hand with the fingers of his right. "If I, Werner of Orseln, were now to walk upstairs, and in so many words tell my lady, 'the sweet, easy princess,' as you name her, Joan of the Sword, as we are proud——"

"*Joan of the Sword! Hoch!*"

The men-at-arms at the lower table, the bearded captains at the high board, the very page boys lounging in the niches, rose to their feet at the very name, pronounced in a voice of thunder-pride by Chief Captain Werner.

"Joan of the Sword! Hoch! Hent yourselves up, Wends! Up, Plassenburg! Joan of the Sword! Our Lady Joan! Hoch, and three times hoch!"

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"Captains Jorian and Boris."

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The hurrahs ran round the oak-panelled hall. Jorian and Boris looked at each other with surprise, but they were stout fellows, and took matters, even when most serious, pretty much as they came.

"I thank you, gentlemen, on behalf of my lady, in whose name I command here," said Werner, bowing ceremoniously to all around, while the others settled themselves to listen. "Now, worthy soldiers of Plassenburg," he went on, "be it known to you that if (to suppose a case which will not happen) I were to tell our Lady Joan what you have confessed to us here and boasted of—that you lied and double lied to her—I lay my life and the lives of these good fellows that the pair of you would be aswing from the corner gallery of the Lion's Tower in something under five minutes."

"Aye, and a good deed it were, too!" chorused the round table of the guard hall. "Heaven send it, the jackanapes! To rail at our Duchess!"

Jorian rose to his feet. "Up, Boris!" he cried; "no Bor-Russian, no kern of Hohenstein that ever lived, shall overcrow a captain of the armies of Plassenburg and a soldier of the Princess Helene—Heaven bless her! Take your ring in your hand, Boris, for we will go up straightway, you and I. And we will tell the Lady Duchess Joan that, having no sweetheart of legal standing, and no desire for any, we choused her into the belief that we would bestow her rings upon our betrothed in the rose-gardens of Plassenburg. Then will we see if indeed we shall be aswing in five minutes. Ready, Boris?"

"Aye, thrice ready, Jorian!"

"About, then! Quick march!"

A great noise of clapping rose all round the hall as the two stout soldiers set themselves to march up the staircase by which they had just descended.

"Stand to the doors!" cried Werner, the chief captain; "do not let them pass. Stand up and drink a deep cup to them, rather! To Captains Jorian and Boris of Plassenburg, brave fellows both! Charge your tankards. The mead of Wendishland shall not run dry. Fill them to the brim. A caraway seed in each for health's sake. There! Now to the honour and long lives of our guests. Jorian and Boris—hoch!"

"*Jorian and Boris—hoch!*"

The toast was drunk amid multitudinous shoutings and handshakings. The two men had stopped, perforce, for the doors were in the hands of the soldiers of the guard, and the pike points clustered thick in their paths. They turned now in the direction of the high table from which they had risen.

"Deal you so with your guests who come on embassy," said Jorian, smiling. "First you threaten with hanging, and then you would make them drunk with mead as long in the head as the devil of Trier that deceived the Archbishop-Elector and gat the holy coat for a foot-warmer!"

"Sit down, gentlemen, and I also will sit. Now hearken well," said Werner; "these good fellows of mine will bear me out that I lie not. You have done bravely and spoken up like good men taken in a fault. But we will not permit you to go to your deaths. For our Lady Joan—God bless her!—would not take a false word from any—no, not if it were on Twelfth Night or after a Christmas merry-making. She would not forgive it from your old Longbeard upstairs, whose business it is—that is, if she found it out. 'To the gallows!' she would say, and we—why, we should sorrow for having to hasten the stretching of two good men. But what would you, gentlemen? We are her servants and we should be obliged to do her will. Keep your rings, lads, and keep also your wits about you when the Duchess questions you again. Nay, when you return to Plassenburg, be wise, seek out a Gretchen and a Katrin and bestow the rings upon them—that is, if ever you mean again to stand within the danger of Joan of the Sword in this her castle of Kernsberg!"

"Gretchens are none so scarce in Plassenburg," muttered Jorian. "I think we can satisfy her—but at a cheaper price than a ring of rubies set in gold!"

CHAPTER II.

THE BAITING OF THE SPARHAWK.

"BRING in the Danish Sparhawk, and we will bait him!" said Werner. "We have shown our guests a poor entertainment. Bring in the Sparhawk, I say!"

At this there ensued unyoked merriment. Each stout lad, from one end of the hall to the other, undid his belt as before a nobler course and nudged his fellow.

"'Ware, I say, stand clear! Here comes the Wild Boar of the Ardennes, the Wolf of Thuringia, the Bear from the Forests of Bor-Russia! Stand clear—stand clear!" cried Werner von Orseln, laughing and pretending to draw a dagger to provide for his own safety.

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The inner door which led from the hall of the men-at-arms to the dungeons of the castle was opened, and all looked towards it with an air of great amusement and expectation.

"Now we shall have some sport," each man said to his neighbour, and nodded.

"The baiting of the Sparhawk! The Sparhawk comes!"

Jorian and Boris looked with interest in the direction of the door through which such a remarkable bird was to arrive. They could not understand what all the pother could be about.

"What the devil——?" said Jorian.

And, not to be behindhand, "What the devil——?" echoed Boris. For mostly these two ran neck and neck from drop of flag to winning-post.

Through the black oblong of the dungeon doorway there came a lad of seventeen or eighteen, tall, slim, dark-browed, limber. He walked between two men-at-arms, who held his wrists firmly on either side. His hands were chained together, and from between them dangled a spiked ball that clanked heavily on the floor as he stumbled forward rather than walked into the room. He had black hair that waved from his forehead in a backward sweep, a nose of slightly Roman shape, which, together with his bold eagle's eyes, had obtained him the name of the Spar or Sparrow-hawk. And on his face, handsome enough though pale, there was such a look of haughty disdain and fierce indignation such as one may see in the demeanour of a newly prisoned bird of prey, which has not yet had time to forget the blue empyrean spaces and the stoop with half-closed wings upon the quarry trembling in the vale.

"Ha, Sparhawk!" cried Werner, "how goes it, Sparhawk? Any less bold and peremptory than when last we met? Your servant, Count Maurice von Lynar! We pray you dance for us the Danish dance of shuffle-board, Count Maurice, if so your Excellency pleases!"

The lad looked up the table and down with haughty eyes that deigned no answer.

Werner von Orseln turned to his guests and said, "This Sparhawk is a little Dane we took on our last foray to the north. It is only in that direction we can lead the foray, since you have grown so law-abiding and strong in Plassenburg and the Mark. His uncles were all killed in the defence of Castle Lynar, on the Northern Haff. We know not which of these had also the claim of fatherhood upon him. At all events, his grandad had a manor there, and came from the Jutland sand-dunes to build a castle upon the Baltic shores. But he had better have stayed at home, for he would not pay the Peace Geld to our

"The lad listened with erected head."

Henry. So the Lion roared, and we went to Castle Lynar and made an end—save of this spitting Sparhawk, whom our master would not let us kill, and whom now we keep with clipped wings for our sport."

The lad listened with erected head and

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haughty eyes to the tale, but answered not a word.

"Now," cried Werner, with his cup in his hand and his brows bent upon the youth, "dance for us as you used upon the Baltic, when the maids came in fresh from their tiring and the newest kirtles were donned. Dance, I say! Foot it for your life!"

The lad Maurice von Lynar stood with his bold eyes upon his tormentors. "Curs of Bor-Russia," he said at last, in speech that trembled with anger, "you may vex the soul of a Danish gentleman with your aspersions, you may wound his body, but you will never be able to stand up to him in battle. You will never be worthy to eat or drink with him, to take his hand in comradeship, or to ride a tilt with him. Pigs of the sty you are, man by man of you—Wends and boors, and no king's gentlemen!"

"A couple of his companions took hold of the boy."

"Bravo!" said Boris, under his breath, "that is well said for a junker!"

"Silence with that tongue of yours!" muttered his mate. "Dost want to be yawing out of that window presently, with the wind spinning you like a capon on a jack-spit? They are uncanny folk, these of the woman's castle—not to trust to. One knows not what they may do, nor where their jest may end."

"Hans Trenck, lift this springald's pretty wrist-bauble!" said Werner.

A laughing man-at-arms went up, his partisan still over his shoulder, and laying his hand upon the chain which depended between the manacled wrists of the boy Maurice, he strove to lift the spiked ball.

"What!" cried Werner, "canst thou, pap-backed babe, not lift that which the noble Nouth Count Maurice of Lynar has perforce to carry about with him all day long? Down with your weapon, man, and to it like an apothecary compounding some blister for stale fly-blown rogues!"

At the word the man laid down his partisan and lifted the ball high between his two hands.

"Now dance!" commanded Werner von Orseln, "dance the Danish milkmaid's coranto, or I will bid him drop it on your toes. Dost want them jellied, man?"

"Drop, and be cursed in your low-born souls!" cried the lad fiercely. "Untruss my hands and let me loose with a sword and ten yards clear on the floor, and, by Saint Magnus of the Isles, I will disembowel any three of you!"

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"You will not dance?" said Werner, nodding at him.

"I will see you fry in hell fire first!"

"Down with the ball, Hans Trenck!" cried Werner. "He that will not dance at Castle Kernsdorf must learn at least to jump."

The man-at-arms, still grinning, lifted the ball a little higher, balancing it in one hand to give it more force. He prepared to plump it heavily upon the undefended feet of young Maurice.

"'Ware toes, Sparhawk!" cried the soldiers in chorus, but at that moment, suddenly kicking out as far as his chains allowed, the boy took the stooping lout on the face, and incontinently widened the superficial area of his mouth. He went over on his back amid the uproarious laughter of his fellows.

"Ha! Hans Trenck, the Sparhawk hath spurred you! A brave Sparhawk! Down went Hans Trenck like a barndoor fowl!"

The fellow rose, spluttering angrily.

"Hold his legs, someone," he said, "I'll mark his pretty feet for him. He shall not kick so free another time.

A couple of his companions took hold of the boy on either side, so that he could not move his limbs, and Hans again lifted high the ball.

"Shall we stand this? They call this sport!" said Boris; "shall I pink the brutes?"

"Sit down and shut your eyes. Our Prince Hugo will harry this nest of thieves anon. For the present we must bear their devilry if we want to escape hanging!"

"Now then, for marrow and mashed trotters!" cried Hans, spitting the blood from the split corners of his mouth.

"*Halt!*"

CHAPTER III.

JOAN DRAWS FIRST BLOOD.

THE word of command came full and strong from the open doorway of the hall.

Hans Trenck came instantly to the salute with the ball in his hand. He had no difficulty in lifting it now. In fact, he did not seem able to let it down. Every man in the hall except the two captains of Plassenburg had risen to his feet and stood as if carved in marble.

For there in the doorway, her slim figure erect and exceedingly commanding, and her beautiful eyes shining with indignation, stood the Duchess Joan of Hohenstein.

"Joan of the Sword," said Jorian, enraptured. "Gott, what a wench!"

In stern silence she advanced into the hall, every man standing fixed at attention.

"Good discipline!" said Boris.

"Shut your mouth!" responded Jorian.

"Keep your hand so, Hans Trenck," said their mistress; "give me your sword, Werner! You shall see whether I am called Joan of the Sword for naught. You would torture prisoners, would you, after what I have said? Hold up, I say, Hans Trenck!"

And so, no man saying her nay, the girl took the shining blade and, with a preliminary swish through the air and a balancing shake to feel the elastic return, she looked at the poor knave fixed before her in the centre of the hall with his wrist strained to hold the prisoner's ball aloft at the stretch of his arm. What wonder if it wavered like a branch in an unsteady wind?

"Steady, there!" said Joan.

And she drew back her arm for the stroke.

The young Dane, who, since her entrance, had looked at nothing save the radiant beauty of the figure before him, now cried out, "For Heaven's sake, lady, do not soil the skirts of your dress with his villain blood. He but obeyed his orders. Let me be set free, and I will fight him or any man in the castle. And if I am beaten, let them torture me till I am carrion fit only to be thrown into the castle ditch."

The Duchess paused and leaned on the sword, holding it point to the earth.

"By whose orders was this thing done?" she demanded.

The lad was silent. He disdained to tell tales even on his enemies. Was he not a gentleman and a Dane?

"By mine, my lady!" said Werner von Orseln, a deep flush upon his manly brow.

The girl looked severely at him. She seemed to waver. "Good, then!" she said, "the Dane shall fight Werner for his life. Loose him and chafe his wrists. Ho! there—bring a dozen swords from the armoury!"

The flush was now rising to the boy's cheek.

"I thank you, Duchess," he said. "I ask no more than this."

"Faith, the Sparhawk is not tamed yet," said Boris; "we shall see better sport ere all be done!"

"Hold thy peace," growled Jorian, "and look."

* * * * *

"Out into the light!" cried the young Duchess Joan, pointing the way with Werner's

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sword, which she still held in her hand. And going first she went forth from the hall of the soldiery, down the broad stairs, and soon through a low-arched door with a sculptured coat-of-arms over it, out into the quadrangle of the courtyard.

"And now we will see this prisoner of ours, this cock of the Danish marches, make good his words. That, surely, is better sport

"'Halt!'"

than to drop caltrops upon the toes of manacled men."

Werner followed unwillingly and with a deep flush of shame upon his brow.

"My lady," he said, "I do not need to prove my courage after I have served Kernsberg and Hohenstein for thirty years—or well-nigh twice the years you have lived—fought for you and your father and shed my blood in a score of pitched battles, to say nothing of forays. Of course I will fight, but surely this young cock might be satisfied to have his comb cut by younger hands."

"Was yours the order concerning the dropping of the ball?" asked the Duchess Joan.

The grey-headed soldier nodded grimly.

"I gave the order," he said briefly.

"Then by St. Ursula and her boneyard, you must stand to it!" cried this fiery young woman. "Else will I drub you with the flat of your own sword!"

Werner bowed with a slightly ironic smile on his grizzled face.

"As your ladyship wills," he said; "I do not give you half obedience. If you say that I am to get down on my knees and play cat's cradle with the Kernsdorf bairns, I will do it!"

Joan of the Sword here looked calmly at him with a certain austerity in her glance.

"Why, of course you would!" she said simply.

Meanwhile the lad had been freed from his bonds and stood with a sword in his hand suppling himself for the work before him with quick little guards and feints and attacks. There was a proud look in his eyes, and as his glance left the Duchess and roved round the circle of his foes, it flashed full, bold, and defiant.

Werner turned to a palish, lean Bohemian who stood a little apart.

"Peter Balta," he said, "will you be my second? Agreed! And who will care for my honourable opponent?"

"Do not trouble yourself—that will arrange itself!" said Joan to her chief captain.

With that she flashed lightfoot into one of the low doors which led into the flanking turrets of the quadrangle, and in a tierce of seconds she was out again, in a forester's dress of green doublet and broad pleated kirtle that came to her knee.

"I myself," she said, "will be this young man's second, in this place where he has so many enemies and no friends."

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"Then Werner threw down his sword."

As the forester in green and the prisoner stood up together, the guards murmured in astonishment at the likeness between them.

"Had this Dane and our Joan been brother and sister, they could not have favoured each other more," they said.

A deep blush rose to the youth's swarthy face.

"I am not worthy," he said, and kept his eyes upon the lithe figure of the girl in its array of well-fitting green. "I cannot thank you!" he said again.

"Tut," she answered, "worthy—unworthy—thank—unthank—what avail these upon the mountains of Kernsberg and in the Castle of Joan of the Sword? A good heart, a merry fight, a quick death! These are more to the purpose than many thanks and compliments. Peter Balta, are you seconding Werner? Come hither. Let us try the swords. Will not these two serve? Guard! Well smitten! There, enough. What, you are touched on the sword arm?

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Faith, man, for the moment I forgot that it was not you and I who were to drum. This tickling of steel goes to my head like wine and I am bound to forget. I am sorry—but, after all, a day or two in a sling will put your arm to rights again, Peter. These are good swords. Now then, Maurice von Lynar — Werner. At the salute! Ready! Fall to!"

The burly figure of the Captain Werner von Orseln and the slim, arrowy swiftness of Maurice the Dane were opposed to the clear shadow of the quadrangle, where neither had any advantage of light, and the swords of their seconds kept them at proper distance according to the fighting rules of the time.

"I give the Sparhawk five minutes," said Boris to Jorian, after the first pass. It was little more than formal and gave no token of what was to follow. Yet for full twenty minutes Werner von Orseln, the oldest sworder of all the north, from the marshes of Wilna to the hills of Silesia, could do nothing but stand on the defensive, so fierce and incessant were the attacks of the young Dane.

But Werner did not give back. He stood his ground, warily, steadfastly, with a half smile on his face, a wall of quick steel in front of him, and the point of his adversary's blade ever missing him an inch at this side, and coming an inch short upon that other. The Dane kept as steadily to the attack and made his points as much by his remarkable nimbleness upon his feet as by the lightning rapidity of his sword-play.

"The Kernsberger is playing with him!" said Boris, under his breath.

Jorian nodded. He had no breath to waste.

"But he is not going to kill him. He has not the Death in his eye!" Boris spoke with judgment, for so it proved. Werner lifted an eyebrow for the fraction of a second towards his mistress. And then at the end of the next rally his sword just touched his young adversary on the shoulder and the blood answered the thrust, staining the white underdoublet of the Dane.

Then Werner threw down his sword and held out his hand.

"A well fought rally," he said; "let us be friends. We need lads of such metal to ride the forays from the hills of Kernsberg. I am sorry I baited you, Sparhawk!"

"A good fight clears all," replied the youth, smiling in his turn.

"Bring a bandage for his shoulder, Peter Balta!" cried Joan. "Mine was the cleaner stroke which went through your great muscle, but Werner's is somewhat the deeper. You can keep each other company at the dice-box these next days. And, as I warrant neither of you has a Lübeck guilder to bless yourselves with, you can e'en play for love till you wear out the pips with throwing."

"Then I am not to go back to the dungeon?" said the lad, one reason of whose wounding had been that he also lifted his eyes for a moment to those of his second.

"To prison—no," said Joan; "you are one of us now. We have blooded you. Do you take service with me?"

"I have no choice—your father left me none!" the lad replied, quickly altering his phrase. "Castle Lynar is no more. My grandfather, my mother, and my uncles are all dead, and there is small service in going back to Denmark, where there are more than enough of hungry gentlemen with no wealth but their swords and no living but their gentility. If you will let me serve in the ranks, Duchess Joan, I shall be well content!"

"I also," said Joan heartily. "We are all free in Kernsberg, even if we are not all equal. We will try you in the ranks first. Go to the men's quarters. George the Hussite, I deliver him to you. See that he does not get into any more quarrels till his arm is better, and curb my rascals' tongues as far as you can. Remember who meddles with the principal must reckon with the second."

CHAPTER IV.

THE COZENING OF THE AMBASSADOR.

THE next moment Joan had disappeared, and when she was seen again she had assumed the skirt she had previously worn over her dress of forester, and was again the sedate lady of the castle, ready to lead the dance, grace the banquet, or entertain the High State's Councillor of Plassenburg, Leopold von Dessauer.

But when she went upstairs she met on the middle flight a grey-bearded man with a skull cap of black velvet upon his head. His dress also was of black, of a distinguishing plain richness and dignity.

"Whither away, Ambassador?" she cried gaily at sight of him.

"To see to your principal's wound and that of the other whom your sword countered in the trial bout!"

"What? You saw!" said the Duchess, with a quick flush.

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I am indeed privileged not to be blind," said Dessauer; "and never did I see a sight that contented me more."

"And you stood at the window saying in your heart (nay, do not deny it) unwomanly—bold—not like my lady the Princess of Plassenburg. She would not thus ruffle in the courtyard with the men-at-arms!"

"I said no such thing," said the High Councillor. "I am an old man and have seen many fair women, many sweet princesses, each perfect to their lovers, some of them even perfect to their lords. But I have never before seen a Duchess Joan of Hohenstein."

"Ambassador," cried the girl, "if you speak thus and with that flash of the eye, I shall have to bethink me whether you come not as an ambassador for your own cause."

"I would that I were forty years younger and a prince in my own right, instead of a penniless old baron. Why, then, I would not come on any man's errand, nor take a refusal even from your fair lips!"

"I declare," said the Duchess Joan impetuously, "you should have no refusal from me. You are the only man I ever met who can speak of love and yet be tolerable. It is a pity that my father left me the evil heritage that I must wed the Prince of Courtland or lose my dominions!"

At the sound of the name of her predestined husband a sudden flashing thought seemed to wake in the girl's breast.

"My lord," she said, "is it true that you go to Courtland after leaving our poor eagle's nest up here on the cliffs of the Kernsberg?"

Von Dessauer bowed, smiling at her. He was not too old to love beauty and frankness in women. "It is true that I have a mission from my Prince and Princess to the Prince of Courtland and Wilna. But——"

Joan of the Sword clasped her hands and drew a long breath.

"I would not ask it of any man in the world but yourself," she said, "but will you let me go with you?"

"My dear lady," said Dessauer, with swift deprecation, "to go with the ambassador of another power to the court and palace of the man you are to marry—that were a tale, indeed, salt enough even for the Princes of Ritterdom. As it is——"

The Duchess looked across at Dessauer with great haughtiness. "As it is, they talk more than enough about me already," she said. "Well—I know, and care not. I am no puling maid that waits till she is authorised by a conclave of the empire before she dares wipe her nose when she hath a cold in the head. Joan of the Sword cares not what any prince may say—from yours of Plassenburg, him of the Red Axe, to the fat Margraf George."

"Oh, our Prince, he says naught, but does much," said Dessauer. "He hath been a rough blade in his time, but Karl the Miller's Son mellowed him, and his own Princess hath finally civilised him."

"Well," said Joan of the Sword, with determination, "then it is settled. I am coming with you to Courtland."

A shade of anxiety passed over Dessauer's countenance. "My lady," he answered, "you let me use many freedoms of speech with you. It is the privilege of age and frailty. But let me tell you that the thing is plainly foolish. Hardly under the escort of the Empress herself would it be possible for you to visit, without scandal, the court of the Prince of Courtland and Wilna. But in the train of an envoy of Plassenburg, even if that ambassador be poor old Leopold von Dessauer, the thing is frankly impossible."

"Well, I am coming, at any rate!" said Joan, as usual rejecting argument and falling back upon assertion. "Make your count with that, friend of mine, whether you are shocked or no. It is the penalty a respectable diplomatist has to pay for cultivating the friendship of lone females like Joan of Hohenstein."

Von Dessauer held up his hands in horror that was more than half affected.

"My girl," he said, "I might be your grandfather, it is true, but do not remind me of it too often. But if I were your great-great-grandfather the thing you propose is still impossible. Think of what the Margraf George and his chattering train would say!"

"Think of what every fathead princeling and beer-swilling ritter from here to Basel would say!" cried Joan, with her pretty nose in the air. "Let them say. They will not say anything that I care the snap of my finger for. And in their hearts they will envy you the experience—shall we say the privilege?"

"Nay, I thought not of myself, my lady," said Dessauer, "for an old man, a mere anatomy of bones and parchment, I take strange pleasure in your society—more than I ought, I tell you frankly. You are to me more than a daughter, though I am but a poor baron of Plassenburg and the faithful servant of the Princess Helene.

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It is for your sake that I say you cannot come to Wilna with me. Shall the future Princess of Courtland and Wilna ride in the train of an ambassador of Plassenburg to the palace in which she is soon to reign as queen?"

Dessauer started.

"You dare not," he said; "why, there is not a lady in the German land, from Bohemia to the Baltic, that dares do as much."

"Ladies—I am sick for ever of hearing that a lady must not do this or that, go here

"'I would that I were forty years younger.'"

"I said not that I would go as the Duchess," Joan replied, speaking low. "You say you saw me at the fight in the courtyard out there. If you will not have the Duchess Joan von Hohenstein, what say you to the Sparhawk's second, Johann the Squire?"

or there, because of her so fragile reputation. She may do needlework or embroider altar-cloths, but she must not shoot with a pistolet or play with a sword. Well, I am a lady; let him counter it who durst. And I cannot broider altar-cloths, and I will not try—but

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I can shoot with any man at the flying mark. She must have a care for her honour, which (poor, feckless wretch !) will be smirched if she speaks to any as a man speaks to his fellows. Faith ! For me I would rather die than have such an egg-shell reputation. I can care for mine own. I need none to take up my quarrel. If any have a word to say upon the repute of Joan of the Sword —why, let him say it at the point of her rapier."

The girl stood up, tall and straight, with her head thrown back at the world, with an exact and striking counterpart of the defiance of the young Dane in the presence of his enemies an hour before. Dessauer stood wavering. With quick tact she altered her tone, and with a soft accent and in a melting voice she said, "Ah, let me come. I will make such a creditable squire all in a suit of blue and silver, with just a touch of a juice upon my face that my old nurse knows the secret of."

Still Dessauer stood silent, weighing difficulties and chances.

"I tell you what," she cried, pursuing her advantage, "I will see the man I am to marry as men see him, without trappings and furbelows. And if you will not take me, by my faith ! I will send Werner there, whom you saw fight the Dane, as my own envoy, and go with him as a page. On the honour of Henry, my father, I will ! "

Von Dessauer capitulated. "A wilful woman"—he smiled—"a wilful, wilful woman. Well, I am not responsible for aught of this, save for my own weakness in permitting it. It is a madcap freak, and no good will come of it."

"But you will like it ! " she said. "Oh, yes, you will like it very much. For, you see, you are fond of madcaps."

CHAPTER V.

JOHANN THE SECRETARY.

TEN miles outside the boundary of the little hill state of Kernsberg, the embassage of Plassenburg was met by another cavalcade bearing additional instructions from the Princess Helene. The leader was a slender youth of middle height, the accuracy of whose form gave evidence of much agility. He was dark-skinned, of an olive complexion, and with black hair which curled crisply about his small head. His eyes were dark and fine, looking straightly and boldly out upon all comers.

With him, as chiefs of his escort, were those two silent men Jorian and Boris, who had ridden to Plassenburg for instructions. None of those who followed Von Dessauer had ever before set eyes upon this youth, who came with fresh despatches, and, in consequence, great was the consternation and many the surmises as to who he might be who stood so high in favour with the Prince and Princess.

But his very first words made the matter clear.

"Your Excellency," he said to the Ambassador, "I bring you the most recent instructions from their Highnesses Hugo and Helene of Plassenburg. They sojourn for the time being in the city of Thorn, where they build a new palace for themselves. I was brought from Hamburg to be one of the master-builders. I have skill in plans, and I bring you these for your approval and in order to go over the rates of cost with you, as Treasurer of the Plassenburg and the Wolfsmark."

Dessauer took, with every token of deference, the sheaf of papers so carefully enwrapt and sealed with the seal of Plassenburg.

"I thank you for your diligence, good master architect," he said, "I shall peruse these at my leisure, and, I doubt not, call upon you frequently for explanations."

The young man rode on at his side, modestly waiting to be questioned.

"What is your name, sir ? " asked Von Dessauer, so that all the escort might hear.

"I am called Johann Pyrmont," said the youth promptly, and with engaging frankness ; "my father is a Hamburg merchant, trading to the Spanish ports for oil and wine, but I follow him not. I had ever a turn for drawing and the art of design ! "

"Also for having your own way, as is common with the young," said the Ambassador, smiling shrewdly. "So, against your father's will, you apprenticed yourself to an architect ? "

The young man bowed.

"Nay, sir," he said, "but my good father could deny me nothing on which I had set my mind."

"Not he," muttered Dessauer under his breath ; "no, nor anyone else ! "

So, bridle by jingling bridle, they rode on over the interminable plain till Kernsberg, with its noble crown of towers, became first grey and afterwards pale blue in the utmost distance. Then, like a tall ship at sea, it sank altogether out of sight. And still they rode on through the marshy hollows, round

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innumerable little wildfowl-haunted lakelets, and over the sandy rolling dunes to the city of Courtland, where was abiding the Prince of that rich and noble principality.

It had been a favourite scheme of dead princes of Courtland to unite to their fat acres and populous mercantile cities the hardy mountaineers and pastoral uplands of Kernsberg. But though Wilna and Courtland were infinitely more populous, the Eagle's Nest was ill to pull down, and hitherto the best laid plans for their Union had invariably fallen through. But there had come to Joan's father, Henry called the Lion, and the late Prince Michael of Courtland a better thought. One had a daughter, the other a son. Neither was burdened with any law of succession, Salic or other. They held their domains by the free tenure of the sword. They could leave their powers to whomsoever they would, not even the Emperor having the right to say, "What doest thou?" So with that frank carelessness of the private feelings of the individual which has ever distinguished great politicians, they decreed that, as a condition of succession, their male and female heirs should marry each other.

This bond of heritage-brotherhood, as it was called, had received the sanction of the Emperor in full Diet, and now it wanted only that the Duchess Joan of Hohenstein should be of age, in order that the provinces might at last be united and the long wars of highland and lowland at an end.

The plan had taken everything into consideration except the private character of the persons principally affected, Prince Louis of Courtland, and the young Duchess Joan.

As they came nearer to the ancient city of Courtland, it spread like a metropolis before the eyes of the embassy of the Prince and Princess of Plassenburg. The city stretched from the rock whereon the fortress-palace was built, along a windy, irregular ridge. Innumerable crow-stepped gables were set at right angles to the street. The towers of the minster rose against the sky at the lower end, and far to the southward the palace of the Archbishop cast peaked shadows from its many towers, walled and cinctured like a city within a city.

It was a far-seen town this of Courtland, populous, prosperous, defenced. Its clear and broad river was navigable for any craft of the time, and already it threatened to equal if not to outstrip in importance the free cities of the Hanseatic League—so far, at least, as the trade of the Baltic was concerned.

Courtland had long been considered too strong to be attacked, save from the Polish border, while the adhesion of Kernsberg, and the drafting of the Duchess's hardy fighting mountaineers into the lowland arm would render the princedom safe for many generations.

Pity it was that plans so far-reaching and purposes so politic should be dependent upon the whims of a girl.

But then it is just such whims that make the world interesting.

* * * * *

It was the last day of the famous tournament of the Black Eagle in the princely city of Courtland. Prince Louis had sent out an escort to bring in the travellers and conduct them with honour to the seats reserved for them. The Ambassador and High Councillor of Plassenburg must be received with all observance. He had, he gave notice, brought a secretary with him. For so the young architect was now styled, in order to give him an official position in the mission.

The Prince had also sent a request that as this was the day upon which all combatants wore plain armour and jousted unknown, for that time the Ambassador should accept other escort and excuse him coming to receive him in person. They would meet at dinner on the morrow, in the great hall of the palace.

The city was arrayed in flaunting banners, some streaming high from the lofty towers of the cathedral, while others (in streets into which the winds came only in puffs) more languidly and luxuriously unfolded themselves, as the Black Eagle on its ground of white everywhere took the air. All over the city a galaxy of lighter silk and bunting, pennons, bannerettes, parti-coloured streamers of the national colours danced becking and bowing from window and roof-tree.

Yet there was a curious silence too in the streets, as they rode towards the lists of the Black Eagle, and when at last they came within hearing of the hum of the thousands gathered there, they understood why the city had seemed so unwontedly deserted. The Courtlanders surrounded the great oval space of the lists in clustered myriads, and their eyes were bent inwards. It was the crisis of the great *melée*. Scarcely an eye in all that assembly was turned towards the strangers, who passed quite unobserved to their reserved places in the Prince's empty box. Only his sister Margaret, throned on high as Queen of Beauty, looked down upon them with interest,

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seeing that they were men who came, and that one at least was young.

It was a gay and changeful scene. In the brilliant daylight of the lists a hundred knights charged and recharged. Those who had been unhorsed drew their swords and attacked with fury others of the enemy in like case. The air resounded with the clashing of steel on steel.

Fifty knights with white plumes on their helmets had charged fifty wearing black, and the combat still raged. The shouts of the people rang in the ears of the ambassador of Plassenburg and his secretary, as they seated themselves and looked down upon the tide of combat over the flower-draped balustrades of their box.

"The Blacks have it!" said Dessauer after regarding the *melée* with interest. "We have come in time to see the end of the fray. Would that we had also seen the shock!"

And indeed the Blacks seemed to have carried all before them. They were mostly bigger and stronger built men, knights of the landward provinces, and their horses, great solid-boned Saxon chargers, had by sheer weight borne their way through the lighter ranks of the Baltic knights on the white horses.

Not more than half-a-dozen of these were now in the saddle, and all over the field were to be seen black knights receiving the submission of knights whose broken spears and tarnished plumes showed that they had succumbed in the charge to superior weight of metal. For, so soon as a knight yielded, his steed became the property of his victorious foe, and he himself was either carried or limped as best he could to the pavilion of his party, there to remove his armour and send it also to the victor—to whom, in literal fact, belonged the spoils.

Of the half-dozen white knights who still kept up the struggle, one shone pre-eminent for dashing valour. His charger surged hither and thither through the crowd, his spear was victorious and unbroken, and the boldest opponent thought it politic to turn aside out of his path. Set upon by more than a score of riders, he still managed to evade them, and even when all his side had submitted and he alone remained—at the end of the lists to which he had been driven, he made him ready for a final charge into the scarce broken array of his foes, of whom more than twenty remained still on horseback in the field.

But though his spear struck true in the middle of his immediate antagonist's shield and this opponent went down, it availed the brave white knight nothing. For at the same moment half a score of lances struck him on the shield, on the breastplate, on the vizor bars of his helmet, and he fell heavily to the earth. Nevertheless, scarcely had he touched the ground when he was again on his feet.

"A closely cropped fair-haired head was revealed."

Sword in hand, he stood for a moment unscathed and undaunted, while his foes, momentarily disordered by the energy of the charge, reined in their steeds ere they could return to the attack.

"Oh, well ridden!" "Greatly done!" "A most noble knight!" These were the exclamations which came from all parts of

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the crowd which surged about the barriers on this great day.

"I would that I were down beside him with a sword in my hand also!" said the young architect, Johann Pyrmont, secretary of the embassage of Plassenburg.

"'Tis well you are where you are, madcap, sitting by an old man's side, instead of fighting by that of a young one," said Dessauer. "Else then, indeed, the bent would be on fire."

But at this moment the Princess Margaret, sister of the reigning Prince, rose in her place and threw down the truncheon, which in such cases stops the combat.

"The black knights have won," so she gave her verdict, "but there is no need to humiliate or injure a knight who has fought so well against so many. Let the white knight come hither—though he be of the losing side. His is the reward of highest honour. Give him a steed, that he may come and receive the meed of bravest in the tournay!"

The knights of the black were manifestly a little disappointed that after their victory one of their opponents should be selected for honour. But there was no appeal from the decision of the Queen of Love and Beauty. For that day she reigned alone, without council or diet imperial.

The black riders had therefore to be contented with their general victory, which, indeed, was indisputable enough.

The white knight came near and said something in a low voice, unheard by the general crowd, to the Princess.

"I insist," she said aloud; "you must unhelm, that all may see the face of him who has won the prize."

Whereat the knight bowed and undid his helmet. A closely-cropped fair-haired head was revealed, the features clearly chiselled and yet of a massive beauty, the head of a marble emperor.

"My brother—you!" cried Margaret of Courtland in astonishment.

The voice of the Princess had also something of disappointment in it. Clearly she had wished for some other to receive the honour, and the event did not please her. But it was otherwise with the populace.

"The young Prince! The young Prince!" cried the people, surging impetuously about the barriers. "Glory to the noble house of Courtland and to the brave Prince."

The Ambassador looked curiously at his secretary. He was standing with eyes brilliant as those of a man in fever. His face paled even under its dusky tan. His lips quivered. He had straightened himself up as brave and generous men do when they see a deed of bravery done by another, or like a woman who sees the man she loves publicly honoured.

"The Prince!" said Johann Pyrmont, in a voice hoarse and broken; "it is the Prince himself."

And on his high seat the State's Councillor, Leopold von Dessauer, smiled well pleased.

"This turns out better than I had expected," he said. "God himself favours the drunkard and the madcap. Only wise men suffer for their sins—aye, and often for those of other people as well."

(*To be continued.*)

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How They Spend Christmas at Sandringham.

One of the principal causes which, apart from other weighty considerations, have so especially endeared the Prince and Princess of Wales to the hearts of millions of English men and women scattered throughout the civilised world is the simplicity and homeliness—if the word may be used without disrespect—of the ordinary routine of their daily lives. The Prince of Wales is not one of those potentates who pass from one uniform to another with the rapidity of a quick change artist, and would invent a new one for each fresh occasion rather than appear without the pomp and panoply of symbolic dress. On the contrary, the Prince is never so happy as when he can turn away from all the pageantry of the Court, and in the tweed suit and felt hat of an ordinary English gentleman endeavour to forget for a while the burdens and responsibilities of his high station.

Of the Princess it may be said that, thoroughly as she fulfils the duties of her position when she represents the Sovereign at the great State functions of the year, and fully as she may enjoy the gaieties of the London Season, she is even happier during the weeks which she spends from time to time at Sandringham in the bosom of her family, when the house-parties of distinguished visitors have ceased for a while, and she is free to devote herself entirely to her own private tastes and recreations, like any other lady of the land. In their own county the Prince and Princess have played the part of great landowners and good neighbours with remarkable graciousness and striking success. They have laid aside the exclusive traditions of the house of Hanover, and put themselves

THE NORWICH GATE, SANDRINGHAM, IN WINTER.
Photo by Bedford Lemere & Co., Strand.

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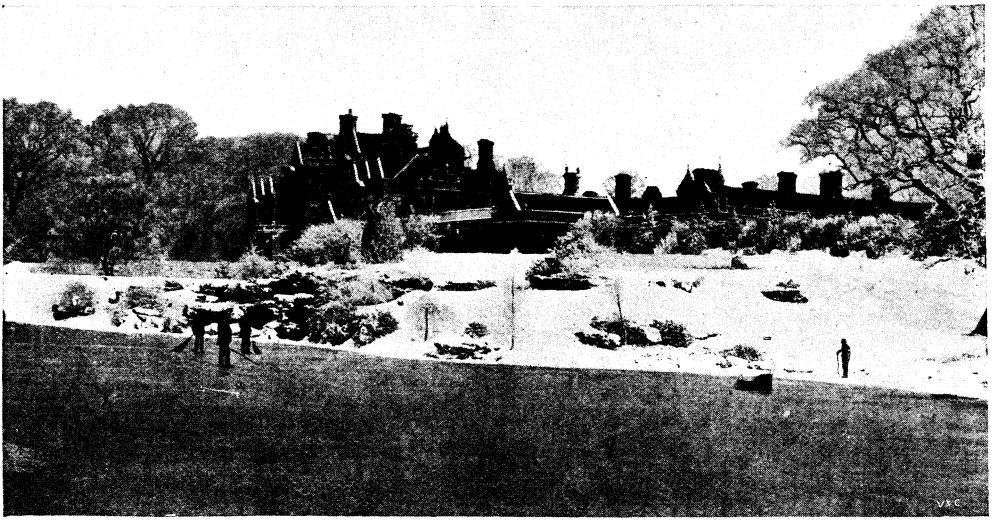
forward as the chief representatives of the democratic spirit of the age which has penetrated all ranks of the social system. It is well known that their tactful and gracious demeanour as host and hostess at their own country seat has conciliated into warm partisanship some who were at one time disposed to be hostile to the dynasty.

It is only natural, therefore, to expect that the old-fashioned customs and festivities of the Christmas season, the traditions of goodwill to all, and of bounty or charity to humbler and poorer neighbours and dependents, would appeal especially to natures of this kind. As a matter of fact, the Prince and Princess of Wales have for years spent their Christmas at Sandringham



SANDRINGHAM IN WINTER: THE SKATING POND IN THE FOREGROUND.
Photo by Ralph, Dersingham.

in good old-fashioned style, uniting all the mighty feasting, the sports and merriment, the decorative use of flowers and evergreens which trace back through centuries of our history past the Christian story into Druidical mists, to the pretty customs of the Christmas tree, with its adornment of tinsel, flags, crackers, and flaring tapers, and the midnight invocation of Santa Claus, which were brought over from Germany by the Prince Consort, and so cordially welcomed by the children of these islands.

For some time before the actual anniversary there is a stir of preparation about the house. Most of the presents, especially the more costly ones, have been purchased in London beforehand, but the tradesmen by appointment to the Prince and Princess are only too glad to send down consignments of goods to Sandringham in order that the family may be able to supplement their previous purchases. Great boxes of Christmas cards arrive for inspection and selection. Present-giving is as much cherished an institution in the Danish family as in our own, and on the Princess's account costly and well chosen gifts journey to the Amalienborg Palace at Copenhagen, the Castle of Gatchina in Russia, the Royal Palace at Athens, and the Duke of Cumberland's villa on the Lake of Gmunden; while the various cousins, nephews and nieces, and the whole troop of relations on both sides by blood or marriage, are remembered in some way or other. Many of these tokens have to be sent out some days in advance, so that they may arrive punctually in time for Christmas morning. Then there are the numerous letters which must be written, and telegrams which have to be sent. It would surprise the stranger to see the enormous number of orange envelopes, which begin to arrive at quite an early date, and continue to pour in even on Christmas Day itself. They come from all parts of the world, from relations, friends, former dependents, public bodies, public men, and even total strangers who are apparently impelled by some irresistible impulse to telegraph their good wishes to the Prince of Wales. Very often there is a curious tempering of loyalty and respect by economy, especially in the matter of the address. Presents of all kinds, moreover, are brought

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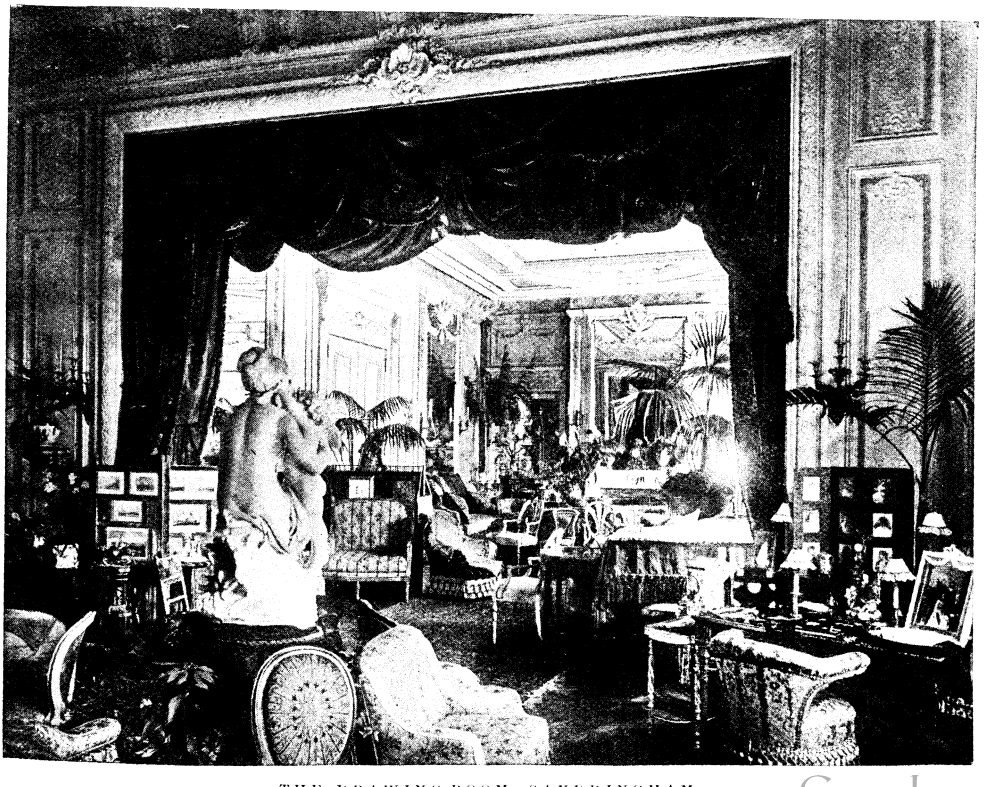
by hand, by rail, or parcel post from all quarters. Among others, a very interesting consignment arrives from the Royal kitchens at Windsor on behalf of the Queen. When this is opened it proves to contain a small mountain of the great Alpine range of Royal plum pudding, a big, savoury woodcock pie, a brace of year-old cygnets which form part of the annual tribute which the Queen takes from the swan communities of the Thames, and a great boar's head prepared according to the Windsor recipe and rendered ferociously attractive with bristling tusks and encochinealed gums. It may be imagined that the flood of presents does not pass by little

SANDRINGHAM CHURCH.
Photo by Ralph, Dersingham.



THE DRAWING-ROOM, SANDRINGHAM.
Photo by Fedford Lemere & Co., Strand.

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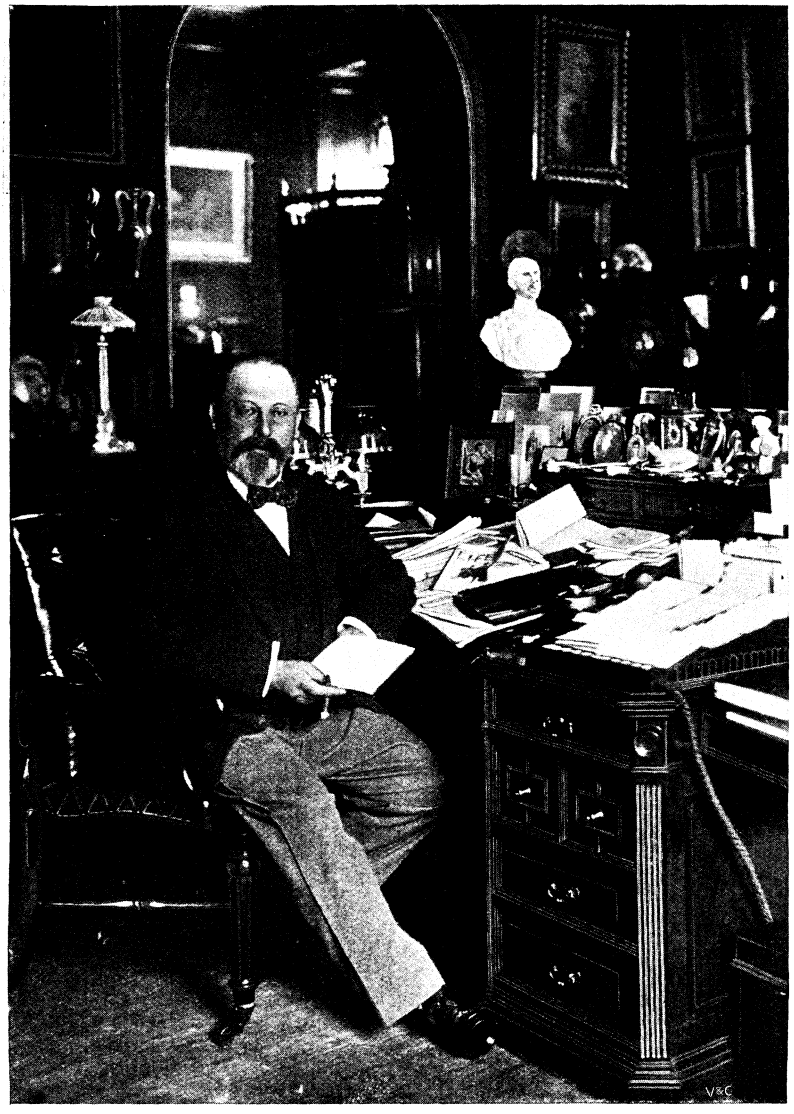
Prince Edward, his brother, and sister, without leaving a very considerable deposit for their benefit. Toys of all kinds come in, almost as if there were a widespread conspiracy to provide the trio with stock in trade for setting up a Lowther Arcade on their own account. None of the party, moreover, are more intensely interested in the plum pudding, the Christmas tree, the decorations, the presents, the crackers, and, above all, the lighted tapers, than the three youngest members; and the ladies of the household find that their own pleasure in the customs of Christmas has received a keen stimulus since they have had the joy of witnessing and encouraging the delight of the children of York and the two little lassies of the house of Duff.



H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES IN HIS STUDY.
Photo by Russell & Sons, Baker Street.

Early in the week the head gardener sends in several loads of evergreens for the decoration of the house, at which the Princess of Wales and Princess Victoria not only preside, but take an active part in the work, as, indeed, they do in the adornment of the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Sandringham, where the family will attend divine service on Christmas morn. Then there is the choosing of the young firs—carefully selected some time back and trained for the purpose—which are to bear the load of presents and trimmings for the house-party and the household, and in the setting out of these Christmas trees the Princess of Wales, her two daughters, and the Duchess of York, take the keenest interest. Formerly, when they were all younger and Princess Maud was unmarried, it was the youngest of the Prince's daughters who was the life and soul of all the preparations, who led the laughter and provided half the fun. Last year, however, the Princess spent her Christmas in her husband's country,

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THE DINING-ROOM, SANDRINGHAM, WITH TABLE ARRANGED FOR DINNER.

Photo by Bedford Lemere & Co., Strand.

BOUDOIR OF THE PRINCESS OF WALES, SANDRINGHAM.

Photo by Bedford Lemere & Co., Strand.

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and at the time at which I write it is not known whether she will be able to rejoice her family with her presence at Christmas-time, or will follow the precedent established in last December.

By Christmas Eve, however, the house-party will be complete. The Duke and Duchess of Fife, the Ladies Alexandra and Victoria Duff, will have arrived and settled down in the big suite of rooms which is prepared for them. The Duke and Duchess of York, Prince Edward, Prince George, and the tiny Princess Victoria Mary will have moved in a body from York Cottage. If Prince and

PRINCESS VICTORIA OF WALES AND PRINCESS CHARLES OF DENMARK.
Photo by T. Fall, Baker Street.

Princess Charles of Denmark are in England they will have driven over from Appleton, and the prettiest flower of the tree will be once more blooming on the native stem. There may be a cousin from overseas, or a brother of the Duchess of York, to swell the list, but the party is as a rule strictly limited to the family and the household. Sir Francis Knollys and Sir Dighton Probyn, who may be described as the Prince's right and left hand men, will be of the number, and the Royal ladies would not be happy without Miss Knollys, of whom they are very fond, and who is a great authority on Christmas customs and decorations. Sometimes, too, the Prince, with that warmness of heart which is his marked characteristic, will insist that some former governor, or tutor, or lady who has been concerned in the training of his children, and who would otherwise spend a lonely Christmas, shall come and join the merry gathering assembled at Sandringham, and it may be imagined that this considerate kindness is productive of much real happiness.

On Christmas Eve the festal programme begins with a distribution of beef to the labourers, workmen, and cottagers past work, on the Sandringham estate. This takes place in the carriage-room of the Royal mews. Most of the house-party are present to witness the ceremony, and the Princess usually leads off with a few kind words to the old people as they approach in turn. The joints average over six pounds, but they are arranged according to the number in each family. The recipients come up to the table in the order of their parishes, and the number, as a rule, is over three hundred. Usually proceedings end by someone of the veterans proposing three cheers for the Royal givers of the bounty. The evening is the time when gifts are exchanged in the family and the Christmas trees are exhibited. The presents show a great deal of love and forethought, for they are of the useful and desirable kind. "Exactly what I have wanted for a long time," occurs to the mind of the lucky receiver. Very often several members of the family unite to delight another with a valuable gift. Jewellery, costly furs, a fine Broadwood grand piano, horses, dogs, have from time to time figured among the Christmas offerings. The ladies find that the Prince does not forget the feminine love of sweets. The best *fondants* and *marrons glacés* minister to this taste.

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H.R.H. THE PRINCESS OF WALES.

Photo by W. & D. Downey, Ebury Street.

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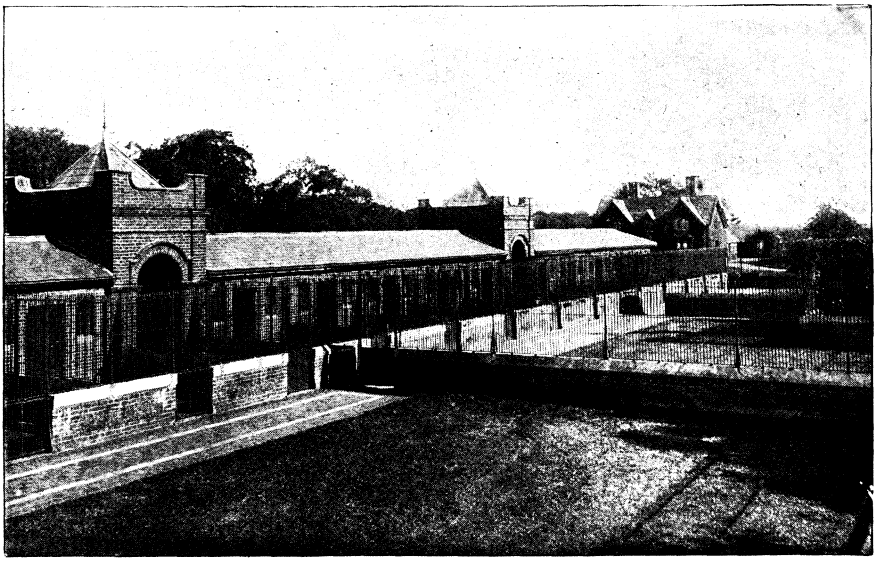
Christmas Day begins with the children, who, when they have got over the first transports of delight at the charming presents that Santa Claus has apparently brought them—that is, if children nowadays do believe in the German saint, and do not privately discuss the point whether the mysterious midnight dispenser of toys is not "really mother"—indulge in a wild rush round the house to say "Merry Christmas" to the "grown-ups"

THE PRINCESS'S DAIRY.
Photo by Ralph, Dersingham.



THE KENNELS.
Photo by T. Fall, Baker Street.

THE HOME FARM.
Photo by Ralph, Dersingham.

and to be hugged by loving arms in return. Divine service is held at St. Mary Magdalene's, and is attended by all the house-party, the suites, and the domestic household. The church is an old one, which has been twice restored and enlarged by the Prince. It is generally quite filled by the household and outdoor staff. The Royal party occupy

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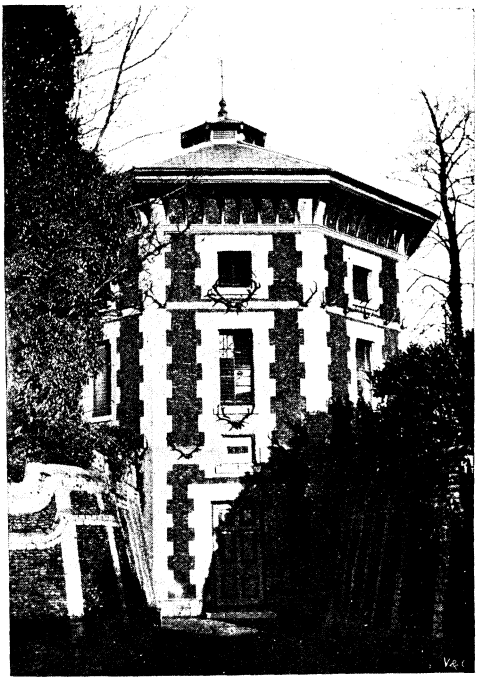
carved oak seats in the nave, and the rest sit at the back. The service is conducted by Canon Frederick Hervey, Rector of Sandringham, Queen's Chaplain, and Private Domestic Chaplain to the Prince of Wales. He is assisted in the choral parts by an excellent choir composed of school children and members of the staff. The Christmas carols are chosen by the Princess, and she usually includes, "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing." After service there is a walk to the stables and the kennels. In the latter there are some seventy or eighty dogs, including Luska, the Siberian sleigh-dog, which was a present from the Czar. After lunch, if there should happen to be ice, the party will go skating on the lake—the Princess being especially fond of this exercise—or a bicycle ride may be planned. A favourite amusement after tea is to adjourn to the American bowling-alley. At this pastime the Duke of York is an adept.

The crowning ceremony of the day is, of course, the Christmas dinner, at which all the ladies appear in the grandest *tenue* in honour of the occasion. The Princess often wears the great necklace of brilliants and opals which was presented to her by the Corporation of London, and cost £10,000.



THE GAME LARDER.
Photo by Ralph, Dersingham.

THE PRINCESS OF WALES AND HER FAVOURITE DOGS.
Photo by T. Fall, Baker Street.

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The dining-room is a fine saloon, with a carved and fretted roof. The walls are panelled with large pieces of tapestry, set in gilded frames. The table is arranged so that the Prince and Princess face each other in the middle. The sideboard is loaded with massive plate. Here and there festoons of evergreens, relieved by the flare of scarlet berries, add a festal touch to the whole.

Later in the week a house-party arrives for New Year's Day, which is kept with high festivities of a more public kind. This year, unhappily, Christmas at Sandringham will of sad necessity be robbed of much of its wonted gaiety by reason of the mourning for the late Queen of Denmark, the beloved mother of the Princess of Wales. There are wounds that time alone can heal, but the heartfelt sympathy which will this year find its place in the Christmas wishes of the English people for the Princess in her day of mourning will form, at least a message of comfort.

PRINCESS VICTORIA OF YORK.
Photo by Ralph, Dersingham.

PRINCE ALBERT OF YORK.
Photo by Ralph, Dersingham.

PRINCE EDWARD OF YORK.
Photo by Ralph, Dersingham.

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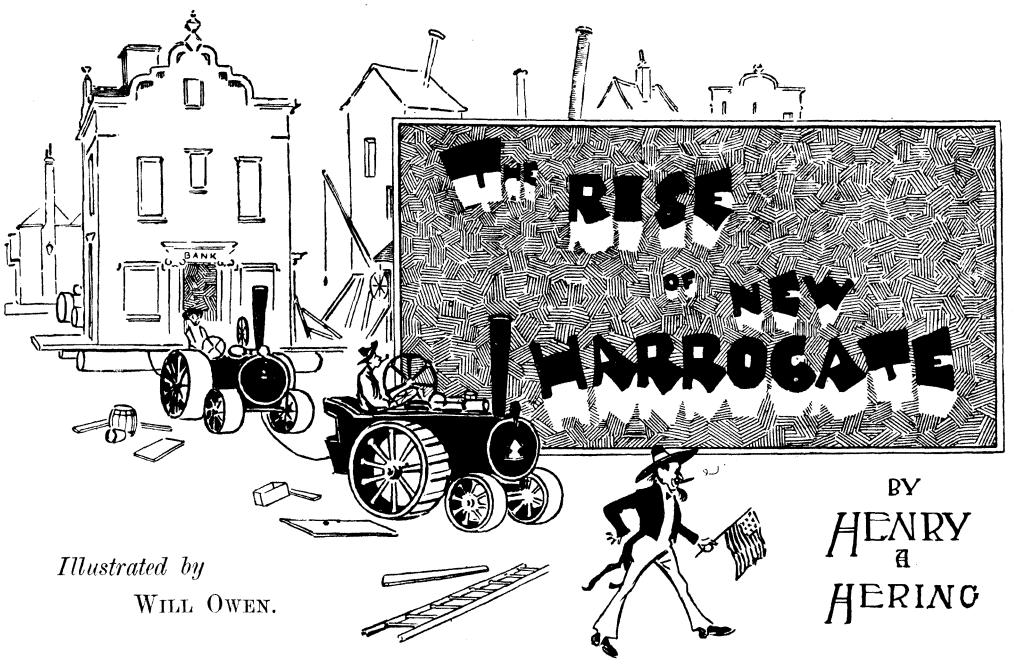

Illustrated by
WILL OWEN.

BY
HENRY
A
HERING

AS we steamed out of the depôt, I glanced at the name of the place: "New Harrogate," I read. The name certainly did not strike me as appropriate. I had stayed at Harrogate in the Old Country, and anything more unlike it in the States I had scarcely seen than this town of chimneys, of factories and warehouses, of steam and smoke.

I gave expression to my thoughts to the individual who had just entered and taken the seat opposite me, and whose general appearance suggested the late Victor Emmanuel out on a Bank Holiday.

"Wal, cert'nly," he replied, "it does seem a bad fit for a name, unless you happen to know pertic'lers, but I reckon that when you've assimilated the nat'ral hist'ry of the city, you'll say it's a pretty handy designation. P'raps you'd like to hear a few details. You might call 'em unusual without exaggeratin'."

"Thank you," I replied. "I should be interested in hearing them, if it is not troubling you too much."

"Not at all, Colonel; I'm Deputy-Mayor of New Harrogate, and I take it as part of my official duties to enlighten strangers on our hist'ry. I reckon there ain't many spots on United States territory that have such a record.

"I s'pose I'd better start at the beginnin', say fifteen years ago. Maybe you're surprised to learn we go back so far as that. Take my word for it, sir, New Harrogate was not born yesterday, but fifteen years ago or thereabouts its site was a howlin' wilderness, populated chiefly by coyotes, an' trains ran from Minneapolis to Tontine City without a stop.

"There was a coon at Tontine—secretary or somethin' at the Museum there—who'd got an almighty craze for inventin' things nobody oughter want, an' discoverin' objec's that Providence cert'nly intended to keep dark. Wal, one day, Silas—his name was Silas P. Cornu—camped out on the site of New Harrogate with a note-book and a barometer. Only Silas knew what he contemplated findin'; but he stayed ther three days without droppin' on it. He had his own liquor an' provisions with him, so was sorter independent of Nayter; but jest before he struck his tent he had a drink from a spring that bubbled outer the ground hard by. Silas had pretty well roughed it in all p'ints of the compass, an' he weren't what you'd call pertic'ler; so when he said that spring water was nasty, you might take his word for it you wouldn't have cottoned to it yerself. He threw the rest of the liquor away, an' then went on to sample another spring a little further off. If that first one was nasty, the second one was about thirty-two times worse. Silas tasted it, an' then put his glass down in a hurry. He was turnin' away, when suddenly a thought occurred to him. He filled a bottle from one stream, an' a bottle from another; an' that's all he brought home along with his note-book an' barometer.

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"Silas warn't long in discoverin' what was in those two bottles, Colonel, an' if he'd had his head screwed on right, he'd have bought the whole claim where those springs were. He could have got it cheap, sir, an' as a result of that bit of speculatin' he could have had a house in Fifth Avenue that would have made Jacob Astor an' Cornelius Vanderbilt turn green with envy. He could have done that, an' run his yacht, an' chummed with the Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace, an' married a duchess, an' had a trifle left for investin' as well. Instead of that, he just told folk, casual

"'Silas P. Cornu.'"

like, that there was a sight of mineral springs where he'd been to, as near as two pins to the British Harrogate waters; and if you wanted to be cured of gout, rheumatism, lumbago, sciatica, an' liver complaint, all you had to do was to camp out, as he'd done, an' go through a course of magnesia an' sulphur water.

"The very day he mentioned it, two prospectors set out for the vicinity Silas had designated, an' before the month was out there was an hotel, a newspaper office, an' a pump-room there; an' finger-posts all the country round, labelled, 'This way to New Harrogate: Go an' be cured.'

"I reckon it was a pretty good discovery, that of Silas Cornu's. I don't know that he had a better find in all his life. Tontiners began to believe in him a bit when they saw what a bouncin' success New Harrogate was turnin' out. In three months it was a fashionable waterin' place in full swing. They were buildin' baths superior to any in the New World, an' the waters were advertised all over the States as curin' pretty well every known or unknown disease you could mention exceptin' toothache.

"I went there the followin' year myself. Not that I was sufferin' from anythin' pertic'ler, but, like a lot of other folk, I wanted to have a good time of it in a quiet sorter way. An' I had it, too, Colonel, for New Harrogate was a real bang-up place fur folk that didn't run on liquor an' gamblin' saloons.

"Ye started the day at six-thirty, when the band commenced playin', an' ye took yer first dose of waters in the pump-room to the sound of the "Lost Chord" or some other funeral tune—they always played slow music before breakfast at New Harrogate. Then ye had a walk roun' the gardens an' looked at yer neighbours an' their daughters, an' then back agin for another ten or fourteen ounces of sulphur as maybe. Ye took magnesia at eleven to a military march, an' a bath in the afternoon, when the band was runnin' on waltzes. I found the Aix Douche fitted in best with the music, an' I had one every day. In the evenin' after dinner ye went to the Spa Concert Room, where there was singing' an' conjurin', an' the band played polkas. At ten, when ye saw a gallop in the conductor's eye, they cleared you out, an' ye went to bed.

"It was a simple sorter wickedness, that New Harrogate bizness, but folk took to it amazin', women 'specially. It was a far-off cry to Saratoga, ye see, an' ye could show off yer gowns jest as well at New Harrogate.

"I liked the place so well I went there agin in the fall of the followin' year to finish up a drivin' spin I'd been takin'. I drove inter the town one evenin', an' I never was more astonished in my life. Instead of the hummin' crowd I'd seen there the year before, there wasn't even a boy in the streets. I say streets, but there wasn't a durned street in the place. There was the baths an' the bandstand in one clump, an' a single row of boardin'-houses in another, an' that was all. The intervenin' space consisted chiefly of the stump ends an' roots of the city I'd known.

"I was jest about dazed at the sight. I hitched my mare onter the bandstand, an'

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walked up the steps inter the baths. The ticket bureau was empty. There wasn't a soul to be seen.

"I went down a passage, an' at the end of it I found a man eatin' sandwiches.

"He seemed sorter surprised to see me. 'What do ye want?' he said.

"'I want an Aix Douche to start with,' I replied.

"'P'raps the Kissingen Spray wouldn't do?' he said, sarcastic like.

"'It wouldn't.'

"'Nor the Russian Vapour?'

"'No.'

"'Why, man, there ain't no Aix Douches, nor Sprays, nor Vapours, nor Packs left in the pipes. There ain't a drop of water on tap. The springs have given out—dried up, the whole b'ilin' lot of 'em.'

"'Given out?'

"'Run dry.'

"'When?' I asked, pretty well thunderstruck.

"'About three months ago. Clean cut off. We've never been able to pump a drop into the tanks since. Silas Cornu came down an' tried all sorts of fakements, but it warn't no blamed use; those springs won't

"'It was a simple sorter wickedness.'"

"'Nor the Homburg Pack, nor the Electric Needle? I can recommend the Electric Needle, stranger.'

"'Young man,' I said, 'I won't have the electric needle, even on your recommendation, nor yet the magnetic pin, nor the hypnotic scissors. I asked for the Aix Douche, an' if ye don't mind I'll have that.'

"'Ye don't mean to say ye're serious?' he said, puttin' his sandwiches down.

"'Of course I am. I've come all the way from Yellowstone Park fur the treatment, anyway.'

listen to reason nohow, so, as the waters seem to have gone away fur good, they've taken the city buildin's on to Tontine.'

"I had heard of folk movin' odd houses before, an' even hotels, but never of a city bein' shifted.

"'They've not moved the whole place, have they?' I said.

"'That's jest what they have done, Senator. They're short of general accommodation at Tontine, an' Silas thought it would be a good way outer the difficulty to cart New Harrogate ther. They raised fourteen

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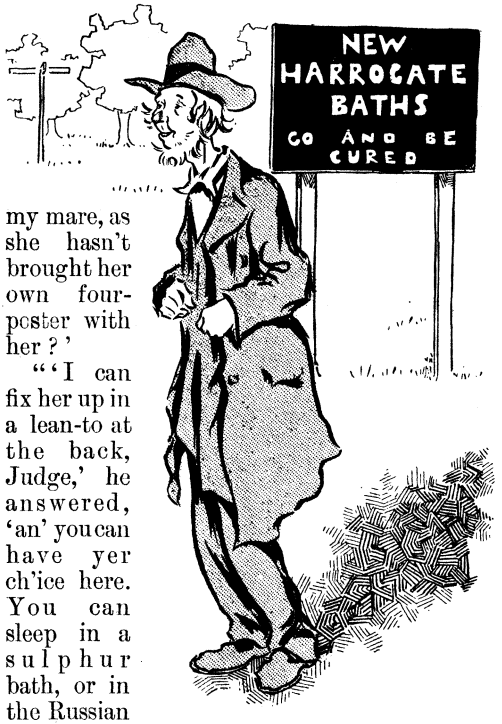
streets, the theatre, three banks, the city hall an' a couple of meetin' houses with jack-screws, an' put rollers underneath, an' started across the plains with 'em a fortnight ago, headed by the Mayor an' the municipal band. They air returnin' fur the baths an' the bandstand, an' those few oddments outside, as soon as they get the main lot fixed up. There's no great call fur baths an' bandstands in Tontine jest now, or they'd have taken the whole show at once.'

"'Wal,' said I, 'I'm sorry the waters gave out, fur I found those Aix Douches soothin'. I s'pose you can put me up fur the night in one of these boxes?' glancin' at the many doors around. 'Have ye accommodation fur my mare, as she hasn't brought her own four-poster with her?'



"'I can fix her up in a lean-to at the back, Judge,' he answered, 'an' you can have yer ch'ice here. You can sleep in a sulphur bath, or in the Russian Vapour, or on the shampooin' slab of the Turkish bath. The coolin' room would have been a likely spot fur you, but they've taken all the couches on to Tontine fur the State penitentiary there.'

"I had a pretty mixed collection to choose from, an' after a tour round I settled on makin' my bed at the bottom of a sulphur bath. It was a good, roomy bath, an' when I'd put pillows an' blankets an' sheets at the bottom, it was as comfortable as you'd need.

"I was pretty well tired when I went to bed, fur I'd had a long drive an' the weather was stiflin' hot. I knew I should sleep that night, an' I warn't mistaken. I slept right through till 4 a.m., when I somehow got the impression I'd been buried alive at sea, an' the water was comin' into the casket. I struggled hard to keep it back, an' awoke. It took me a second or two to certify my dream wasn't true, fur the water was pourin' over me. At last I surmised the springs were runnin' full time ag'in; anyway, the bath was fillin'.

"I jumped out pretty smartly. There was the soun' of runnin' water everywhere, fur all the taps had been left on at full. If that sandwich eater was a heavy sleeper he might be drowned. I ran to save him and found him shuttin' off the Kissingen Spray.

"'Ain't this a flarin' do?' he said. 'It's what I call rilin' ter think of it happenin' after they've shifted the city. It's a pity that earthquake didn't eventuate a month sooner.'

"'What earthquake?'

"'Didn't you feel it, Senator? It made these baths hum like an Æolian harp last night, an' landed me off the shampooin' slab onter the floor. It has altered the map of the vicinity, sir. The bandstand is split in two, an' the conductor's stool has gone down a fissure in the middle. Maybe it's as well the buildin's were out of the way. Anyhow, it's started the springs ag'in, so we can't complain.'

"'If the water has come to stay those buildin's'll be wanted,' I remarked.

"'That is so, Senator. Per'aps you wouldn't mind runnin' your buggy in their direction, an' informin' the Mayor an' Silas Cornu. It might save a lot of trouble.'

"I rode hard after those buildin's, Colonel. There was no missin' their tracks, fur they lay right across the plain a mile wide. There was a gen'ral impression on the territory that city had passed over as if a tribe of sea serpents had been havin' a trottin' match, an' every now an' agin you'd come across a house door, or a chimney stack, or a hen-coop, or some other domestic trifle.

"After ten hours' ridin' I struck the rear-guard, which consisted of the City Hall an' the theatre. Some traction engines were haulin' 'em smoothly along on rollers, but bein' pretty solid they'd dropped behind the rest of the city. There was a notice outside the theatre that it was closed fur redecoratin', but they were transactin' bizness as usual in the City Hall. I told the Mayor my news, an' he anchored the two buildin's till he'd had time to run back an' see fur himself that the water was on. Then I hurried after Silas Cornu, who was well in front. I passed

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a row of detached villas on my way. The inhabitants might have been on top of their own cellars for the interest they took in the removal. It was pretty hot work shiftin' the rollers, an' keepin' 'em movin'; but all the time the folk inside were cookin', eatin', playin' pianos, and readin' newspapers in the windows, jest as if they were at home, an' one fam'ly was playin' lawn tennis on the concrete floor of their back-yard.

"An hour ahead of them I came up with the bank. Silas was conductin' the movin' op'rashuns himself. It was goin' down hill at the time—pretty briskly, too—to the tune of the 'Washington Post,' from the band stationed in the balcony.

"'Hold hard,' I shouted, 'thishyer buildin's wanted at New Harrogate.'

"'Thishyer is New Harrogate,' said Silas, p'intin' to the buildin's around.

"'Wal, then, it's wanted where it came from. New Harrogate water's on tap agin.'

"'Well, I'm derned,' said Silas, sittin' down an' wipin' his forehead.

"'Air ye sure?' he asked.

"'I oughter know, fur it nearly drowned me last night when I was sleepin' at the bottom of one of yer bathin' tubs.'

"'Where's the bugler?' shouted Silas.

"They brought down the cornet man from the band, an' Silas ordered him to ride on ahead an' blow a gen'ral halt till he'd gone back and consulted with the Mayor.

"It was the evenin' of the followin' day before we j'ined the Mayor at the baths. Both he an' the attendant were lookin' pretty glum.

"'The liquor's on, Silas,' said the Mayor, 'but it ain't the right sort; an' it won't assimilate with whisky, nor with tea, nor yet with the human constitootion, judgin' from my samplin'.'

"'An' it stains blankets somethin' terrible,' said the bathman, p'intin' to mine, which were hangin' up an' now coloured a dirty yellow. 'It won't come out with b'ilin',' he added.

"'What about the sheets?' asked Silas.

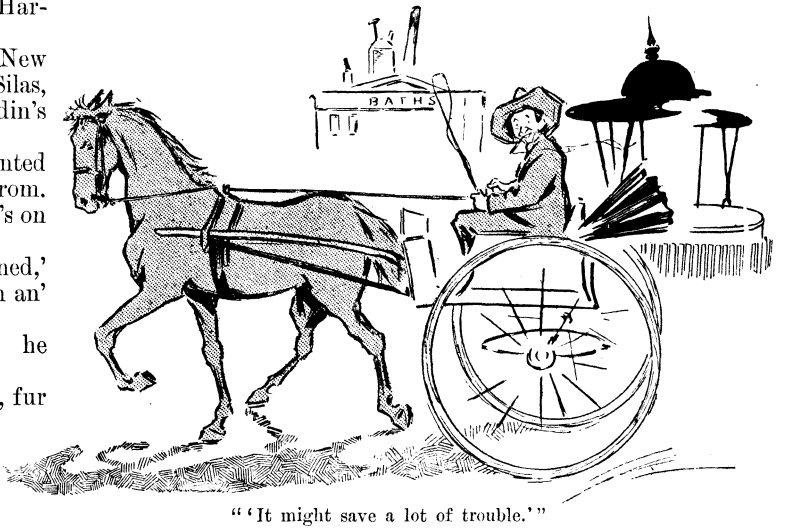
"'That's the derned funny part of it. The blamed liquor don't stain the sheets at all.'

"'Goes on wool an' not on cotton,' said Silas, kinder thoughtful. He tasted the water and fingered the clothes; an' then he turned to us. 'I may be wrong,' he said, 'but it strikes me that thishyer liquor now comin' through the taps is a nat'ral mordant.'

"'An' what the blazes is a nat'ral mordant?' asked the Mayor.

"'Ain't ye aware, Hiram,' said Silas, 'that before you can dye woollen goods a fast colour, you've got to prepare the cloth with a mordant?'

"'I believe I've heard so, Silas,' the Mayor replied. 'Anyway, I'll take yer word fur it.'



"'It might save a lot of trouble.'"

"'That mordant costs money. Here's a nat'ral mordant provided free of cost by an earthquake. If I'm right, there'll be more dollars in it than in curin' gout an' rheumatics. We ain't all gouty, but most of us wears clothes.'

"Silas Cornu was right. It was a nat'ral mordant. The next day the baths were turned into a dye-house by the Mayor, till the one he'd ordered was built. Meanwhile, he dyed Philadelphia goods in the slipper baths, washed 'em clean under the Kissingen Spray, an' hung 'em up to dry in the hot room of the Turkish bath.

"New Harrogate was soon fairly started on a fresh career of prosperity, an' you noticed fur yerself as we passed what she's like to-day. We can dye goods cheaper than any other place in the world, an' in consequence we're scoopin' in the dollars with our nat'ral mordant."

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THE SECRET OF LONG LIFE,

AS REVEALED BY FAMOUS LIVING VETERANS AND RECORDED BY FRED A. McKENZIE.*

With contributions from His Royal Highness the DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE, the ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, LORD ARMSTRONG, LORD FARRER, the FATHER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, MR. JOHN PASSMORE EDWARDS, MISS FRANCES POWER COBBE, MISS C. M. YONGE, M. JULES VERNE, and DR. NEWMAN HALL.

"WHY do you come to me? I am not an old man; I am a young one with, I hope, twenty years of work yet before me!"

There was a half-humorous, half-serious smile on my friend's lips when he made this declaration. As I looked at him I was forced to admit that his words were true, notwithstanding the witness of baptismal register and biographical dictionaries that his age was not far short of eighty. His figure was erect, his eyes bright, his frame lissom and active; and his study bore plain signs that he was still a constant and hard worker. I know many young fellows under thirty who could not for a moment compare with him for real youthfulness of body or spirit.

"That is just it, sir," I replied promptly. "You are young, and I want you to tell me how you have managed to keep so, that if ever I live to be over seventy I may be as young as you are now."

To live long may be but a minor thing, but to live many years of strenuous and successful endeavour is what the vast majority of men eagerly and passionately long and pray for. My aim in this inquiry has been to find out from those who have succeeded in attaining to the crown of life how they have done so, and what counsel they would give to the younger generation eager to emulate their example.

Two things have specially impressed me during my quest. First, the fact that the secret dread and half denied fear with which many regard old age is groundless. Some writers, looking at old age from the point of view of youth and middle age, have mournfully depicted the growing weight of increasing years, the diminution of interests, the disappearance of old friends, the addition of physical infirmity which they suppose must come with advancing years. But I find that this supposed heavy burden of life is not felt, at least by very many. Not a single one of the senior leaders of to-day would admit to me that growing years made life an increasing burden. The great majority declared with the utmost emphasis that it was not so. They said that even when much active work had to be laid on one side, and some labours passed on to other hands, kindly Nature more than compensated for the sacrifice in other ways. If the experience of those who have passed three score and ten goes for anything, the crown and evening of life, so far from being a time of deepening shadows and increasing trials, is one of content and restfulness. As Miss Frances Power Cobbe beautifully puts it, in her letter printed further on:—"There is a mysterious compensation provided for those bodily troubles which are strictly natural, and not the result of disease. The failures of our faculties and activities, which would have been unspeakably distressing and even appalling in middle life, come rather gently at last, like sleepiness at bedtime." Or, as a prominent statesman writes to me, "My enjoyment of life at seventy-something is as great as it was at twenty."

The second point on which I find unanimous and emphatic agreement is that hard, sustained and strenuous *work* is the best health preservative, and the most potent and efficacious medicine man can take. "Better work out than rust out," says the old proverb. Utter nonsense! By working hard men do not work out. Rather, they make themselves fitter and stronger. The names at the head of this article are the best proof of this. Every name there is that of one who has toiled far beyond the average, but who has yet found constant labour conserve and build up life.

In my inquiries I usually asked three questions. (1) What is your experience as

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to the supposed growing burden of life with increasing years? (2) Have you habitually observed any special rules about food, drink, hours or limits of work or sleep, exercise or the like? (3) To what do you mainly attribute your longevity?

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.

The old superstition that members of the Royal Family lead lives of luxurious ease is now almost dead. But no one who knows anything of the administration of the British Army could ever entertain the ghost of such a notion about his Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge. Civilians can hardly realise the way in which, as Commander-in-Chief, he permeated the whole British Army with his spirit of thoroughness, his hatred of favouritism, his contempt of the "feather-bed" soldier, whatever the rank of that "feather-bed" soldier might be. His greatest monument remains in the contrast between the British Army immediately after the Crimean War, and the Army when he resigned his Commandership-in-Chief in the autumn of 1895. To-day, though but a few months off eighty years old, his Royal Highness still takes a very active part in life, as every newspaper reader knows.

H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE, K.G.
Photo by T. C. Turner & Co., Barnsbury Park, N.

How has he kept his strength so long? Departing from the unwritten tradition which causes members of the Royal Family, as a rule, to refrain from taking part in symposia, his Royal Highness has honoured me with the following message, through his son, Colonel FitzGeorge:—

"He ascribes his longevity to a good constitution, active life, and *plenty* of occupation and work."

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

The real life of the Archbishop of Canterbury yet remains to be written. There will be few more vivid romances than the story of how this once poor lad, without money and without influential friends, succeeded in reaching the third post in the realm, next but one to her Majesty. To-day Dr. Temple is not ashamed to tell how, when he was a young fellow at college, he was too poor to afford wine, even if he had wished to drink it. Certainly none can ever declare that the Archbishop reached his great office by playing the courtier, or by concealing unpopular opinions. No man of the present generation has been more indifferent to public clamour, none more neglectful of those petty compromises by which some conciliate their opponents.

The secret of the Archbishop of Canterbury's success is an open one known to all men. Throughout his life he has ever been a tireless toiler. He seems naturally incap-

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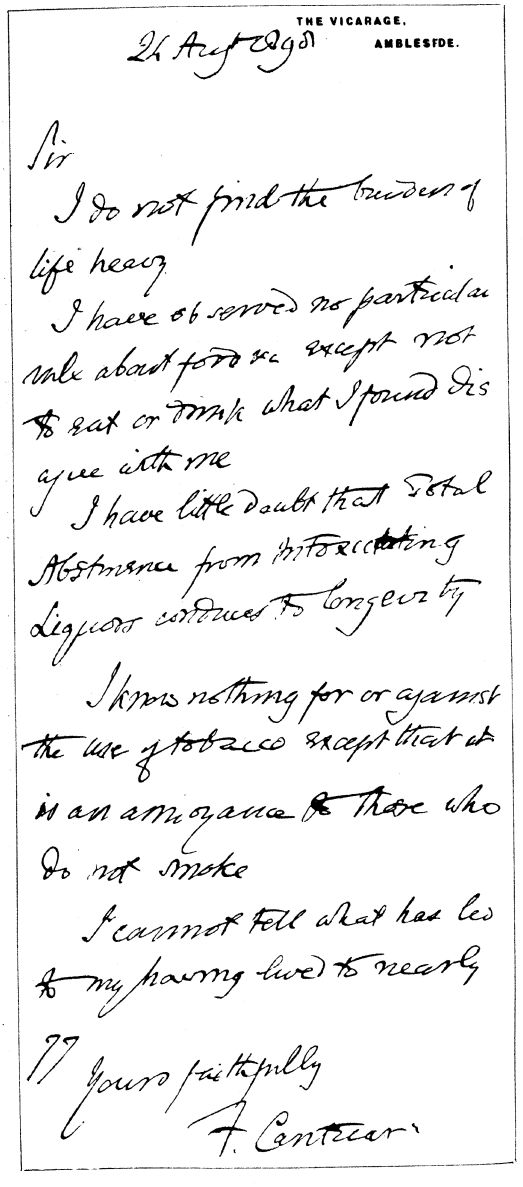
able of understanding how responsible men —especially men to whom the most sacred of all missions has been entrusted—can fritter away their lives on aimless pleasures, or rest content with half done and badly done work.



THE VICARAGE,
AMBLESIDE.

24 Aug 1898

Sir

I do not find the burden of life heavy.

I have observed no particular rule about food &c except not to eat or drink what I found disagree with me.

I have little doubt that total Abstinence from Intoxicating Liquors conduces to longevity.

I know nothing for or against the use of tobacco except that it is an annoyance to those who do not smoke.

I cannot tell what has led to my having lived to nearly 77.

Yours faithfully
F. Cantuar:

LETTER FROM THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

Shirkers, idlers, mere faddists, have ever found in Dr. Temple a brusque censor; but genuine workers could not want a more sympathetic or helpful adviser. I am privileged in being able to give an autobiographical experience which is so interesting that it is here reproduced in facsimile.

A PROMINENT STATESMAN.

The following letter is from one of the leading statesmen of Europe, a noble of large experience of public and official life. I regret that I am not permitted to give the name of my correspondent, and I can only say that his name would lend the greatest weight to his words throughout Europe and America.

The statesman writes:—"I imagine longevity is an incident which attaches to certain families and is hereditary. Some of my ancestors on both sides of the house were long-lived, many of them having attained the age of eighty, and some over ninety. I myself was already born when some great-great-aunts of mine, whose father was born during the lifetime of James the Second, were still in existence. On the other side of the house, those members of the family who did not die early were remarkable for their youthful appearance. My mother always looked more like my sister than my parent.

"If health is preserved, other conditions being equal, a long life is a great blessing. My enjoyment of life at seventy-something is as great as it was at twenty, and I am capable of almost as much exertion now as I was then. In my youth I was rather delicate. I had to be careful as to my regimen, but I have never observed any rules or valetudinarian habits. I do my work early in the day or during the afternoon, and have seldom done much of an evening. In early life I had a warning of the danger of mental exertion late at night, though it arose from an accidental circumstance and want of nourishment.

"What I find most absolutely necessary, both to my mental and physical wellbeing is seven hours' sleep, at the very least, during the twenty-four.

LORD ARMSTRONG.

In his ninetieth year Lord Armstrong is now peacefully spending the end of a notable life in his home at Bamburgh Castle. His life has been that happy combination of intense scientific application and practical, business-like qualities such as the Anglo-Saxon race sometimes produces. To me, at least, the great gunmaker, the famous engineer, is dwarfed before the tireless scientific investigator he has shown himself to be. His own words might well be

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written as the motto of his life: "However high we climb in the pursuit of knowledge, we shall still find heights above us, and the more we extend our view, the more conscious we shall be of the immensity which lies beyond."

Mr. W. A. Watson Armstrong writes to me:—"His lordship requests me to say that length of years prevents him replying in person, as he has been an invalid for some months. With reference to your questions, his lordship cannot say that, except at the times he has been debarred by illness from employing himself, he has ever found his life a burden. His lordship has never followed any particular rules of life as regards diet, except that he has always been moderate in eating and drinking, and had a preference for plain food. He never was a smoker. He has been a hard worker and has filled up his leisure moments with hobbies. He can lay down no rules for the attaining of longevity, unless they be the practice of moderation, and keeping the mind interested and occupied."

DR. TEMPLE, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.
Photo by the London Stereoscopic Co.

The experience of a great political economist may well follow this. Though in his eightieth year, Lord Farrer is still an active force in the affairs of the world. Men who try to break a lance with him in controversy quickly find that to-day his pen is as caustic and his facts and arguments as ready at command as ever. Lord Farrer, writing from Abinger Hall, says:—"As one, originally far from strong, who has outlived many of his much stronger contemporaries, I do not hesitate to give you the following short, and necessarily incomplete, replies to your questions.

"Whether great length of years is desirable is a question on which I express no general opinion. It seems to me that the world grows kinder to one as one grows older. The burden of life does not, so far as I can judge, become increasingly heavy after three score and ten to one who is willing to submit to the limitations which years bring with them, to relax effort and curtail indulgence in proportion to his diminishing strength and capacity, and to regard with satisfaction others doing what he is no longer fit to do.

"As regards your further questions, I have been early and regular in my habits, but with no particular rules. Speaking generally, it seems to me that the conditions which promote the continuance of health and strength are: plenty and variety of sound occupations and interests, pursued with keenness but not in excess; moderation, not abstinence, in eating and

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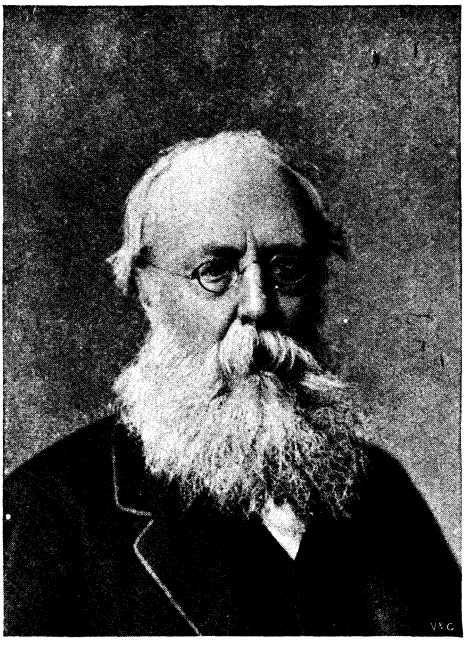
drinking, in energy and enjoyment, in work and in play.

"I may add, without trespassing on deeper matters, of which this is not the place to speak, that absence of personal worry and a kindly attitude towards others are influential factors in preserving health of mind and body."



LORD FARRER.
Photo by Elliott & Fry.

Yours faithfully
Farrer

Ask any man in Berkshire, and he will tell you that Sir John Mowbray is the living ideal of the country gentleman of the old—and now, alas! diminishing—type. A scholar—was he not over sixty years ago a student of Christ Church and President of the Union?—a devoted lover of country life, active in public affairs, his life has been one of many and varied activities. To-day, he will tell you, he still dearly loves his classics, and finds unfailing delights in his Virgil and Horace. Up to well on in the seventies he kept up all the engagements of a member of Parliament, a Church Estate commissioner, chairman of the Clerical and Medical Insurance Society, and a score of other things. To use his own words: "I was practically as vigorous at seventy-one as I was at thirty-one, and in 1886–87 I worked nearly as hard as ever. I do not think it reasonable to look forward with dread to advancing years."

Now that he is in his eighty-fourth year Sir John Mowbray finds it advisable not to do quite so much, though the round of work he leaves for himself would still be considered far more than enough by some much younger men.

"I attribute my longevity mainly to heredity," Sir John Mowbray writes. "My father was eighty-three, my grandfather eighty-four. My mother when she died was close upon ninety-six. I had a great-grandmother who lived to ninety-three. Three generations kept our silver, golden, and diamond weddings. As regards my own habits, moderation in eating and drinking has been everything. I am no teetotaller. I take little meat, and no beer or tobacco. I have always been used to wine in a reasonable quantity.

"In younger days I remained at the House of Commons so long as it sat. I never do this now, and rarely return after dinner. I am one of those who require a great deal of sleep, and am always ready to take it. I was a great walker up to a very recent date."

J. Mowbray
Frank Marlea

From leaders of the world's statecraft, let us return to see some well known names in literature. No other writer has given so much undiluted pleasure to the boys of the English speaking race as M. Jules Verne. To most of us, the day we first picked up one of his books still stands out as a red letter day in our lives. It is now over forty-five years since M. Jules Verne issued his first scientific novel, "Five Weeks in a Balloon," and from then till now he has steadily maintained his literary industry. Up at five in the morning, he at once goes to his desk and remains there

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till eleven, writing and proof correcting. His proofs take him even more time than his writing, for it is not uncommon for him to have five or six proofs of each of his stories before allowing it to go out to the world. In his beautiful home at Amiens, M. Verne is no recluse and assumes no high airs. He takes active part in the local administration of his city, and, as a municipal councillor, he is keenly interested in the details of civic duty and corporate life. Above all, he is an artist, with the artist's realisation that the sordid and prosaic affairs of life are but a small part of it. It has yet to be told how for many years he worked on, when at the height of his popularity, content to receive trivial amounts for his books, while others were reaping fortunes from them.

M. Jules Verne sends the following terse and practical letter :—"I can but reply to the various questions put to me by the honourable Fred A. McKenzie in two words :—'Work and temperance.' There is the whole motto of life ; work always, be temperate in all things.

"And, above all, do not over-indulge in sleep. Obey the precept of the school of Salerno, which runs, if I am not mistaken, thus :—

"Six hours of sleep suffice for old and young,
Seven for the lazy, eight we grant to none."
—*Jules Verne.*

The school of Salerno, to which M. Jules Verne here refers, was the most famous and popular medical school of the Middle Ages, and its book of maxims was the health guide of half Europe for several centuries.

M. JULES VERNE.
Photo by Nadar, Paris.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY, BART., "FATHER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS."
Photo by Elliott & Fry.

In England no writer of pure domestic fiction is so widely read as Miss Charlotte Mary Yonge, author of the "Heir of Redclyffe" and innumerable stories and historical works. The mere record of Miss Yonge's industry would fill a column. An active Churchwoman, she has ever kept herself in the background and been content to do her work quietly and unseen. To-day, though seventy-five years old, she still finds her recreation in parish work and in caring for others.

Miss Yonge writes : "There is nothing special to observe about my life. I have always had good health, lived quietly and much in open country air."

If Miss Yonge's life has been along quiet paths, that of Miss Frances Power Cobbe, the famous anti-vivisectionist and journalist, has been one of conflict. To-day, in her seventy-sixth year, in her retired home in North Wales, she still champions the cause she long since espoused. Many years ago, when the "lady journalist" was unknown, Miss Cobbe was a regular leader writer on a London evening paper, going to her office three mornings a week, and turning out her leaders and notes on all subjects just as a man writer. She kept up this for several years, and afterwards wrote a number of leaders for a London morning paper. Those who know Miss Cobbe's books or the hundreds of pamphlets and leaflets that have come from her pen—and who has not seen some of them ?

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—need no other witness that she is no holder of a feeble pen.

Miss Frances Power Cobbe writes: "There is nothing in my prolonged activity deserving of notice in these days when so many octogenarians still play their part in the world. I have not yet passed my seventy-sixth birthday, and the little I do now in the way of writing papers and pamphlets on the Vivisection question, and occasionally speaking on the subject, is nothing to boast of. I trust the splendid young women who are now growing up in England will, when they come to my age, be able to do twice as much as I.

"In reply to your questions, I would say:—*First.* Life is not 'altogether a burden' after three score years and ten. It is not a burden at all, so long as those we love best are left to 'totter down' the hill with us 'hand in hand.' As to the infirmities of

MISS C. M. YONGE.
Photo by Elliott & Fry.

age, I have thought that there is a mysterious compensation provided for those bodily troubles which are strictly natural, and not the result of disease. The failures of our faculties and activities, which would have been unspeakably distressing and even appalling in middle life, come rather gentle at last, like sleepiness at bedtime. Of course, I am not speaking of such terrible trials as blindness, or paralysis, but merely of finding our walks insensibly shorten, and our studies of books (when we attempt to study, which is not often!) ending in a peaceful nap in our armchair. This is not painful

MISS FRANCES POWER COBBE.
Photo by Elliott & Fry.

or burdensome. We are inclined to laugh at ourselves, rather than to cry.

"You ask me, further, to what causes do I attribute my long tenure of vitality? I owe it mainly, I cannot doubt, to my good fortune in having had parents both healthy in body and mind. My father, indeed, was a man of immense energy and strength, who in his early manhood had fought through the Mahratta wars, and led a charge of cavalry at Assaye. I had the further blessing of a happy childhood, guided by the wisest and tenderest of mothers. Starting so prosperously, I believe I have maintained my vigour and the high level of my spirits chiefly through my habitual respect for my own healthy instincts. I have never despised Nature's little kindly hints that it was time to eat, or drink, or take exercise, or go to bed. The temptation to neglect all these in a lordly (or rather, ladylike) way, and to wait famishing for breakfast or starving for dinner, or to sit all day in a stuffy room for

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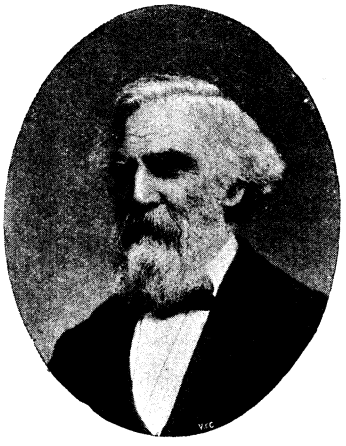

MR. PASSMORE EDWARDS.
Photo by Elliott & Fry.

want of energy to take a walk, or to wait up at night nervous and shivering till somebody comes back from a party or from Parliament, these common proceedings of my more ethereal sisters have never commended themselves to me, and, fortunately, I have been free to follow my own more wholesome habits."

Frances Power Cobbe

It is with great pleasure that I am able to give the experience of Mr. John Passmore Edwards, the distinguished philanthropist. The story of his life presents as striking an example of hard work, self-help, and zeal for the public good as any the century can show. Sixty years ago he came to London, a poor Cornish lad, as junior clerk in a publishing house. He lived for many years in one room, and in the evenings studied hard at the "Birkbeck Institute" to improve his education. Even as a young man he was a diligent social reformer, a strenuous advocate of the Peace cause, and a practical supporter of many forms of social amelioration. Soon he started as publisher on his own account, and was, I believe, the first to issue "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in this country. His struggle was a very hard one, and prosperity did not come till middle life was on him. Then his successful papers and his proprietorship of the *Echo* made him a man of wealth. How he has used his wealth for the public good is so well known that I need but refer to it here.

Mr. Edwards writes:—"You say in yours of yesterday you are seeking 'from some of the senior leaders of to-day the secret of their long-maintained health and years,' and about which you ask me several questions. Though I do not consider myself a 'senior leader' in any sense, I will briefly answer them.

"You first ask: 'Is great length of years to be desired?' This must depend on a variety of things—on health, on circumstances, on hopefulness of disposition, on memories, and on friends and relations. One man or woman may enjoy good health, have a comfortable home and surroundings, and have hosts of friends, whilst another may have no such advantages. A similar answer, therefore, cannot apply to both, and each one must answer for himself.

"You next ask: 'To what do you mainly attribute the fact that you have been able to maintain strength and capacity for work after the overwhelming majority of men have used up their lives?' My answer is: Because Nature endowed me with a good constitution. I had three brothers, one older and two younger than myself. I have survived them all, mainly because I inherited a stronger constitution, and secondly, because I have worked hard and lived regularly. I believe one very simple but most important rule of health is to keep your bedroom window open all night, winter and summer alike.

"Your third question runs thus: 'Does your experience bear out the statement that the habitual (though moderate) use of alcoholic drinks and tobacco tend to lessen health and capacity for work?' My answer is: Certainly, in some degree, and as a rule.

REV. NEWMAN HALL, LL.D.
Photo by Elliott & Fry.

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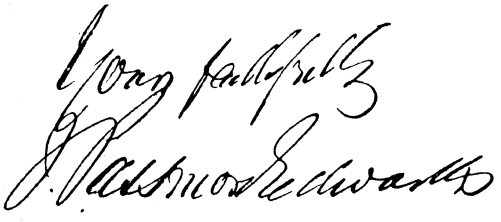
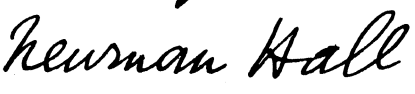
For twelve years—from the age of twenty-four to thirty-six—the keystone period of active life, I was a vegetarian and a teetotaller. During that time I accumulated a store of healthful energy which fitted and fortified me for the activities of after years. Thank Heaven, I was never a smoker.

"Your last question is: 'Would you say that constant hard work, whether mental or physical, is harmful, if reasonable precautions are observed?' My belief is that 'constant hard work,' sandwiched with occasional short holidays and accompanied by 'reasonable precautions,' contributes to a ripe and useful old age. The man who practically imports the most wisdom into his daily doings will live the longest and the happiest, and will serve his generation the best."



Let me conclude this paper with the experience of the Nestor of Nonconformity, the venerable Dr. Newman Hall. The great Gothic building in Westminster Bridge Road, Christ Church, stands as a permanent memorial to him, if memorial were wanted. To-day he is living in so-called retirement in his home on Hampstead Heath, though his retirement means preaching four times a week, and often walking ten miles a day, What must he, then, have done when he was in full work?

Dr. Newman Hall writes:—"I think 'length of years is desirable,' with health of body and mind, and sufficiency for the necessities of life, and the 'Peace of God.' The Old Testament abounds with such promises, 'With long life will I satisfy him,' etc. In my own case, the burden of life after three score and ten has not become increasingly heavy. I have not obeyed rules, but have enjoyed freedom in actions which have become habits—abstaining from the kinds of food which experience has proved injurious, not indulging in late dinners or heavy suppers. I have often found a cup of hot water with bread soaked in it very conducive to a good night's sleep. I generally sleep seven hours without waking. I seldom need as many as eight hours. Since I turned seventy I have often indulged in half an hour's sleep in the afternoon. I avoid brain work after ten p.m. I generally walk about four miles during the day. My parents were total abstainers fifty years before their decease, at the age of 85 and 87. I have been a total abstainer since 1846 (52 years). I began to smoke at the age of eight and left off the same day, and have never resumed it."



We have received so many interesting communications from eminent men and women of advanced age that we propose to publish a further selection from them in an early number.

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DICK SPINDLER'S FAMILY CHRISTMAS.

By Bret Harte.*

Illustrated by Lancelot Speed.

THERE was surprise and some disappointment in Rough and Ready when it was known that Dick Spindler intended to give a "Family" Christmas party at his own house. That he should take an early opportunity to celebrate his good fortune and show hospitality was only expected from the man who had just made a handsome "strike" on his claim; but that it should assume so conservative, old-fashioned, and respectable a form was quite unlooked-for by Rough and Ready, and was thought by some a trifle pretentious. There were not half a dozen families in Rough and Ready; nobody ever knew before that Spindler had any relations, and this "ringing in" of strangers to the settlement seemed to indicate at least a lack of public spirit. "He might," urged one of his critics, "hev given the boys—that had worked alongside o' him in the ditches by day, and slung lies with him around the camp fire by night—he might hev given them a square 'blow out,' and kep' the leavin's for his old Spindler crew, just as other families do. Why, when old man Scudder had his house raisin' last year, his family lived for a week on what was left over, arter the boys had waltzed through the house that night—and the Scudders warn't strangers, either." It was also evident that there was an uneasy feeling that Spindler's action indicated an unhallowed leaning towards the minority of respectability and exclusiveness, and a desertion—without the excuse of matrimony—of the convivial and independent bachelor majority of Rough and Ready.

"Ef he was stuck after some gal and was kinder looking ahead, I'd hev understood it," argued another critic.

"Don't ye be too sure he ain't," said Uncle Jim Starbuck gloomily. "Ye'll find that some blamed woman is at the bottom of this yer 'family' gathering. That and trouble ez almost all they're made for!"

There happened to be some truth in this dark prophecy—but not of the kind that the misogynist supposed. In fact, Spindler had called a few evenings before at the house of the Rev. Mr. Saltover, and Mrs. Saltover having one of her "Salaeratus headaches," had turned him over to her widow sister, Mrs. Huldy Price, who obediently bestowed upon him that practical and critical attention which she divided with the stocking she was darning. She was a woman of thirty-five, of singular nerve and practical wisdom, who had once smuggled her wounded husband home from a border affray, calmly made coffee for his deceived pursuers while he lay hidden in the loft, walked four miles for that medical assistance which arrived too late to save him, buried him secretly in his own "quarter section," with only one other witness and mourner, and so saved her position and property in that wild community who believed he had fled. There was very little of this experience to be traced in her round, fresh-coloured, brunette cheek, her calm, black eyes, set in a prickly hedge of stiff lashes, her plump figure, or her frank, courageous laugh. The latter appeared as a smile when she welcomed Mr. Spindler. "She hadn't seen him for a coon's age," but "reckoned he was busy fixin' up his new house."

"Well, yes," said Spindler, with a slight hesitation, "ye see, I'm reckonin' to hev a kinder Christmas gatherin' of my——" he was about to say "folks," but dismissed it for "relations," and finally settled upon "relatives" as being more correct in a preacher's house.

Mrs. Price thought it a very good idea. Christmas was the natural season for the family to gather to "see who's here and who's there, who's gettin' on and who isn't, and who's dead and buried. It was lucky for them who were so placed that they could do so and be joyful." Her invincible philosophy probably carried her past any dangerous recollections of the lonely grave in Kansas, and holding up the stocking to the light she glanced cheerfully along its level to Mr. Spindler's embarrassed face by the fire.

"Well, I can't say much ez to that," responded Spindler, still awkwardly, "for you see I don't know much about it, any way."

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"How long since you've seen 'em?" asked Mrs. Price, apparently addressing herself to the stocking.

Spindler gave a weak laugh. "Well, you see, ef it comes to that, I've never seen 'em!"

Mrs. Price put the stocking in her lap and opened her direct eyes on Spindler. "Never seen 'em?" she repeated. "Then they're not near relations?"

"There are three cousins," said Spindler, checking them off on his fingers, "a half-uncle, a kind of brother-in-law—that is, the brother of my sister-in-law's second husband—and a niece. That's six."

"But if you've not seen them, I suppose they've corresponded with you?" said Mrs. Price.

"They've nearly all of 'em written to me for money—seeing my name in the paper ez havin' made a strike," returned Spindler simply, "and hevin' sent it, I jest know their addresses."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Price, returning to the stocking.

Something in the tone of her ejaculation increased Spindler's embarrassment, but it also made him desperate. "You see, Mrs. Price," he blurted out, "I oughter tell ye that I reckon they are the folks that 'hevn't got on,' don't you see, and so it seemed only the square thing for me, ez had 'got on,' to give them a sort o' Christmas festival. Suthin', don't ye know, like what your brother-in-law was sayin' last Sunday in the pulpit about this yer Peace and Goodwill 'twixt man and man."

Mrs. Price looked again at the man before her. His sallow, perplexed face exhibited some doubt, yet a certain determination, regarding the prospect the quotation had opened to him. "A very good idea, Mr. Spindler, and one that does you great credit," she said gravely.

"I'm mighty glad to hear you say so, Mrs. Price," he said, with an accent of great relief, "for I reckoned to ask you a great favour! You see," he fell into his former hesitation, "that is—the fact is—that this sort o' thing is rather suddent to me—a little outer my line, don't you see, and I was goin' to ask ye ef you'd mind takin' the hull thing in hand and runnin' it for me."

"Running it for you," said Mrs. Price, with a quick eye-shot from under the edge of her lashes. "Man alive! What are you thinking of?"

"Bossin' the whole job for me," hurried on Spindler, with nervous desperation. "Gettin' together all the things and makin' ready for 'em—orderin' in everythin' that's wanted, and fixin' up the rooms—I kin step out while you're doin' it—and then helpin' me receivin' 'em, and sittin' at the head o' the table—you know—like ez ef you was the mistress."

"But," said Mrs. Price, with her frank laugh, "that's the duty of one of your relations—your niece, for instance—or cousin—if one of them is a woman."

"But," persisted Spindler, "you see, they're strangers to me—I don't know 'em, and I do you. You'd make it easy for 'em—and for me—don't you see? Kinder introduce 'em—don't you know? A woman of your gin'ral experience would smooth down all them little difficulties," continued Spindler, with a vague recollection of the Kansas story, "and put everybody on velvet. Don't say 'No,' Mrs. Price! I'm just kalkilatin' on you."

Sincerity and persistency in a man goes a great way with even the best of women. Mrs. Price, who had at first received Spindler's request as an amusing originality, now began to incline secretly towards it. And, of course, began to suggest objections.

"I'm afraid it won't do," she said thoughtfully, awakening to the fact that it would do and could be done. "You see, I've promised to spend Christmas at Sacramento with my nieces from Baltimore. And then there's Mrs. Saltover and my sister to consult."

But here Spindler's simple face showed such signs of distress that the widow declared she would "think it over"—a process which the sanguine Spindler seemed to consider so nearly akin to taking it over, that Mrs. Price began to believe it herself, as he hopefully departed.

She "thought it over" sufficiently to go to Sacramento and excuse herself to her nieces. But here she permitted herself to "talk it over," to the infinite delight of those Baltimore girls, who thought this extravaganza of Spindler's "so Californian and eccentric!" So that it was not strange that presently the news came back to Rough and Ready, and his old associates learned for the first time that he had never seen his relatives, and that they would be doubly strangers. This did not increase his popularity; neither, I grieve to say, did the intelligence that his relatives were probably poor, and that the Reverend Mr. Saltover had approved of his course, and had likened it to the rich man's feast, to which the halt and blind were invited. Indeed, the allusion was supposed

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to add hypocrisy and a bid for popularity to Spindler's defection, for it was argued that he might have feasted "Wall-eyed Joe" or "Tangle-foot Billy"—who had once been "chawed" by a bear while prospecting—if he had been sincere. Howbeit Spindler's faith was oblivious to these criticisms in his joy at Mr. Saltover's adhesion to his plans and the loan of Mrs. Price as a hostess. In fact, he proposed to her that the invitations should also convey that information in the expression, "by the kind permission of the Rev. Mr. Saltover," as a guarantee of good faith—but the widow would have none of it. The invitations were duly written and despatched.

"Suppose," suggested Spindler, with a sudden lugubrious apprehension, "suppose they shouldn't come?"

"Have no fear of that," said Mrs. Price, with a frank laugh.

"Or ef they was dead?" continued Spindler.

"They couldn't all be dead," said the widow cheerfully.

"I've written to another cousin by marriage," said Spindler dubiously, "in case of accident—I didn't think of him before, because he was rich."

"And have you ever seen him, either, Mr. Spindler?" asked the widow, with a slight mischievousness.

"Lordy! No!" he responded, with unaffected concern.

Only one mistake was made by Mrs. Price in her arrangements for the party. She had noticed what the simple-minded Spindler could never have conceived—the feeling towards him held by his old associates, and had tactfully suggested that a general invitation should be extended to them in the evening.

"You can have refreshments, you know, too, after the dinner, and games and music."

"But," said the unsophisticated host, "won't the boys think I'm playing it rather low down on them—so to speak—givin' 'em a kind o' second table, as ef it was the tailings after a strike?"

"Nonsense," said Mrs. Price, with decision. "It's quite fashionable in San Francisco—and just the thing to do."

To this decision Spindler, in his blind faith in the widow's management, weakly yielded. An announcement in the *Weekly Banner* that "On Christmas evening Richard Spindler, Esq., proposed to entertain his friends and fellow citizens at an 'At home' in his own residence" not only widened the breach between him and the "boys," but awakened an active resentment that only waited for an outlet. It was understood that they were all coming; but that they should have "some fun out of it," which might not coincide with Spindler's nor his relatives' sense of humour, seemed a foregone conclusion.

"'Ef it comes to that, I've never seen 'em!'"

Unfortunately, too, subsequent events lent themselves to this irony of the situation. A few mornings after the invitations were despatched, Spindler, at one of his daily

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conferences with Mrs. Price, took a newspaper from his pocket. "It seems," he said, looking at her with an embarrassed gravity, "that we will have to take one o' them names off that list—the name o' Sam Spindler—and kalkilate upon only six relations coming."

"Ah," said Mrs. Price interestedly, "then you have had an answer, and he has declined?"

"Not that exactly," said Spindler slowly, disparagin' remark that they've 'sent him where it ain't bin the habit to keep Christmas!'"

Mrs. Price gasped, but a glance at Spindler's patient, wistful, inquiring eyes brought back her old courage. "Well," she said cheerfully, "perhaps it's just as well he didn't come."

"Are ye sure o' that, Mrs. Price?" said Spindler, with a slightly troubled expression. "Seems to me, now, that he was the sort as

"'Collected the money from Spindler hi·nself.'"

"but from remarks in this yer paper he was hung last week by the Vigilance Committee of Yolo."

Mrs. Price opened her eyes on Spindler's face as she took the paper from his hand. "But," she said quickly, "this may be all a mistake—some other Spindler! You know, you say you've never seen them!"

"I reckon it's no mistake," said Spindler, with patient gravity, "for the Committee sent me back my invitation with the kinder might hev bin gathered in at the feast—and kinder snatched like a brand from the burnin', accordin' to Scripter. But ye know best."

"Mr. Spindler," said Mrs. Price suddenly, with a slight snap in her black eyes, "are your—are the others like this? Or"—here her eyes softened again, and her laugh returned, albeit slightly hysterical—"is this kind of thing likely to happen again?"

"I think we're pretty sartin o' hevin' six

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to dinner," returned Spindler simply. Then, as if noticing some other significance in her speech, he added wistfully, "But you won't go back on me, Mrs. Price, ef things ain't pannin' out exackly as I reckoned? You see, I never really knew these yer relations."

He was so obviously sincere in his intent, and, above all, seemed to place such a pathetic reliance on her judgment, that she hesitated to let him know the shock his revelation had given her. And what might his other relations prove to be? Good Lord! Yet, oddly enough, she was so prepossessed by him, and so fascinated by his very Quixotism, that it was perhaps for these complex reasons that she said a little stiffly—

"One of these cousins, I see, is a lady—and then there is your niece. Do you know anything about them, Mr. Spindler?"

His face grew serious. "No more than I know of the others," he said apologetically. After a moment's hesitation he went on: "Now you speak of it, it seems to me I've heard that my niece was di-vorced. But," he added, brightening up, "I've heard that she was popular."

Mrs. Price gave a short laugh and was silent for a few minutes. Then this sublime little woman looked up at him. What he might have seen in her eyes was more than he expected, or, I fear, deserved. "Cheer up, Mr. Spindler," she said manfully. "I'll see you through this thing—don't you mind! But don't you say anything about—about—this Vigilance Committee business to anybody. Nor about your niece—it was your niece, wasn't it?—being divorced. Charley (the late Mr. Price) had a queer sort of sister who—but that's neither here nor there! And your niece mayn't come, you know; or if she does you ain't bound to bring her out to the general company."

At parting Spindler, in sheer gratefulness, pressed her hand and lingered so long over it that a little colour sprang into the widow's brown cheek. Perhaps a fresh courage sprang into her heart, too, for she went to Sacramento the next day, previously enjoining Spindler on no account to show any answers he might receive. At Sacramento her nieces flew to her with confidences.

"We so wanted to see you, Aunt Huldy, for we've heard something so delightful about your funny Christmas Party!" Mrs. Price's heart sank, but her eyes snapped. "Only think of it! One of Mr. Spindler's long-lost relatives—a Mr. Wragg—lives in this hotel, and papa knows him. He's a sort of half-uncle, I believe, and he's just furious that Spindler should have invited him. He showed papa the letter; said it was the greatest piece of insolence in the world; that Spindler was an ostentatious fool who had made a little money and wanted to use him to get into society; and the fun of the whole thing was that this half-uncle and whole brute is himself a parvenu—a vulgar, ostentatious creature, who was only a——"

"Never mind what he was, Kate," interrupted Mrs. Price hastily. "I call his conduct a shame."

"So do we," said both girls eagerly. After a pause Kate clasped her knees with her locked fingers and, rocking backwards and forwards, said, "Milly and I have got an idea, and don't you say 'No' to it. We've had it ever since that brute talked in that way. Now, through him, we know more about this Mr. Spindler's family connections than you do; and we know all the trouble you and he'll have in getting up this party. You understand? Now, we first want to know what Spindler's like. Is he a savage, bearded creature, like the miners we saw on the boat!"

Mrs. Price said that, on the contrary, he was very gentle, soft-spoken, and rather good-looking.

"Young or old?"

"Young—in fact, a mere boy, as you may judge from his actions," returned Mrs. Price, with a suggestive matronly air.

Kate here put up a long-handled eyeglass to her fine grey eyes, fitted it ostentatiously over her aquiline nose, and then said, in a voice of simulated horror, "Aunt Huldy—this revelation is shocking!"

Mrs. Price laughed her usual frank laugh, albeit her brown cheek took upon it a faint tint of Indian red. "If that's the wonderful idea you girls have got, I don't see how it's going to help matters," she said drily.

"No! that's not it! We really have an idea. Now look here!"

Mrs. Price "looked here." This process seemed to the superficial observer to be merely submitting her waist and shoulders to the arms of her nieces and her ears to their confidential and coaxing voices.

Twice she said "it couldn't be thought of," and "it was impossible," once addressed Kate as "You limb!" and finally said that she "wouldn't promise—but might write!"

* * * * *

It was two days before Christmas. There was nothing in the air, sky, or landscape of

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that Sierran slope to suggest the season to the Eastern stranger. A soft rain had been dropping for a week on laurel, pine and buck-eye, and the blades of springing grasses and shyly-opening flowers. Sedate and silent hill-sides that had grown dumb and parched towards the end of the dry season became gently articulate again; there were murmurs in hushed and forgotten cañons, the leap and laugh of water among the dry bones of dusty creeks, and the full song of the larger Forks and rivers. South-west winds brought the warm odour of the pine sap swelling in the forest, or the faint, far-off spice of wild mustard springing in the lower valleys. But, as if by some irony of Nature, this gentle invasion of Spring in the wild wood brought only disturbance and discomfort to the haunts and works of man. The ditches were overflowed, the fords of the Fork impassable, the sluicing adrift and the trails and wagon roads to Rough and Ready knee-deep in mud. The stage coach from Sacramento, entering the settlement by the mountain highway, its wheels and panels clogged and crusted with an unctuous pigment like mud and blood, passed out of it through the overflowed and dangerous ford, and emerged in spotless purity, leaving its stains behind with Rough and Ready. A week of enforced idleness on the river "Bar," had driven the miners to the more comfortable recreation of the Saloon Bar, its mirrors, its florid paintings, its arm-chairs and its stove. The steam of their wet boots and the smoke of their pipes hung over the latter like the sacrificial incense from an altar. But the attitude of the men was more critical and censorious than contented, and showed little of the gentleness of the weather or season.

"Did you hear if the stage brought down any more relations of Spindler's?"

The bar-keeper, to whom this question was addressed, shifted his lounging position against the bar and said, "I reckon not—ez far ez I know."

"And that old bloat of a second cousin—that crimson beak—what kem down yesterday—he ain't bin hangin' round here to-day for his reg'lar pizon?"

"No," said the bar-keeper thoughtfully, "I reckon Spindler's got him locked up and is settin' on him to keep him sober till after Christmas, and prevent you boys gettin' at him."

"He'll have the jimjams before that," returned the first speaker; "and how about that dead beat of a half-nephew who borrowed twenty dollars of Yuba Bill on the way down, and then wanted to get off at Shootersville, but Bill wouldn't let him, and scooted him down to Spindler's and collected the money from Spindler himself afore he'd give him up?"

"He's up thar with the rest of the menagerie," said the bar-keeper, "but I reckon that Mrs. Price hez bin feedin' him up. And ye know the old woman—that fifty-fifth cousin by marriage—whom Joe Chandler swears he remembers ez an old cook for a Chinese restaurant in Stockton—darn my skin ef that Mrs. Price hasn't rigged her out in some fancy duds of her own, and made her look quite decent."

A deep groan here broke from Uncle Jim Starbuck.

"Didn't I tell ye?" he said, turning appealingly to the others. "It's that darned widow that's at the bottom of it all! She first put Spindler up to givin' the party, and now—darn my skin—ef she ain't goin' to fix up these ragamuffins and drill 'em so we can't get any fun outer 'em after all! And it's bein' a woman that's bossin' the job and not Spindler, we've got to draw things mighty fine and not cut up too rough, or some of the boys will kick."

"You bet," said a surly but decided voice in the crowd.

"And," said another voice, "Mrs. Price didn't live in 'Bleeding Kansas' for nothing."

"Wot's the programme you've settled on, Uncle Jim?" said the bar-keeper lightly, to check what seemed to promise a dangerous discussion.

"Well," said Starbuck, "we kalkilate to gather early Christmas night in Hooper's Hollow and rig ourselves up Injun fashion, and then start for Spindler's with pitch pine torches, and have a 'torch-light dance' around the house; them who does the dancin' and yellin' outside takin' their turn at goin' in and hevin' refreshment. Jake Cooledge, of Boston, sez if anybody objects to it, we've only got to say we're 'Mummers of the Olden Times,' *sabe?* Then later, we'll have 'Them Sabbath Evening Bells' performed on prospectin' pans by the Band. Then, at the finish, Jake Cooledge is goin' to give one of his surkastic speeches—kinder welcomin' Spindler's family to the Free Openin' o' Spindler's Alms House and Reformatory." He paused, possibly for that approbation which, however, did not seem to come spontaneously. "It ain't much," he added apologetically, "for we're hampered by women; but we'll add to the programme

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"'With great care.' 'Collect on delivery.'"

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ez we see how things pan out. Ye see, from what we can hear, all of Spindler's relations ain't on hand yet! We've got to wait, like in elekshun times, for 'returns from the back counties.' Hello! What's that?"

It was the swish and splutter of hoofs on the road before the door. The Sacramento coach! In an instant every man was expectant, and Starbuck darted outside on the platform. Then there was the usual greeting and bustle, the hurried ingress of thirsty passengers into the saloon, and a pause. Uncle Jim returned, excitedly and pantingly. "Look yer, boys! Ef this ain't the richest thing out! They say there's two more relations o' Spindler's on the coach, come down as express freight, consigned—d'ye hear?—consigned to Spindler!"

"Stiffs—in coffins?" suggested an eager voice.

"I didn't get to hear more. But here they are."

There was the sudden interruption of a laughing, curious crowd into the bar-room, led by Yuba Bill, the driver. Then the crowd parted, and out of their midst stepped two children, a boy and a girl, the oldest apparently of not more than six years, holding each other's hands. They were coarsely yet cleanly dressed, and with a certain uniform precision that suggested formal charity. But more remarkable than all, around the neck of each was a little steel chain, from which depended the regular check and label of the powerful Express Company—Wells, Farge & Co.—and the words: "To Richard Spindler." "Fragile." "With great care." "Collect on delivery." Occasionally their little hands went up automatically and touched their labels as if to show them. They surveyed the crowd, the floor, the gilded bar, and Yuba Bill without fear and without wonder! There was a pathetic suggestion that they were accustomed to this observation.

"Now, Bobby," said Yuba Bill, leaning back against the bar, with an air half-paternal, half-managerial, "tell these gents how you came here."

"By Wellth Fargeth Expreth," lisped Bobby.

"Whar from?"

"Wed Hill, Owegon."

"Red Hill, Oregon? Why, it's a thousand miles from here!" said a bystander.

"I reckon," said Yuba Bill coolly, "they kem by stage to Portland, by steamer to 'Frisco, steamer again to Stockton, and then by stage over the whole line. Allers by Wells, Farge & Co. Express, from agent to agent, and from messenger to messenger. Fact! They ain't bin tetched or handled by anyone but the Kempany's agents; they ain't had a line or direction except them checks around their necks! And they've wanted for nothin' else. Why, I've carried heaps o' treasure before, gentlemen, and once a hundred thousand dollars in greenbacks, but I never carried anythin' that was watched and guarded as them kids! Why, the Division Inspector at Stockton wanted to go with 'em over the line; but Jim Bracy, the messenger, said he'd call it a reflection on himself and resign ef they didn't give 'em to him with the other packages! Ye had a pretty good time, Bobby, didn't ye? Plenty to eat and drink, eh?"

The two children laughed a little weak laugh, turned each other bashfully around, and then looked up shyly at Yuba Bill, and said, "Yeth."

"Do you know where you are goin'?" asked Starbuck, in a constrained voice.

It was the little girl who answered quickly and eagerly—

"Yes, to Chrissmass and Sandy Claus."

"To what?" asked Starbuck.

Here the boy interposed with a superior air—

"Thee meanth Couthin Dick. He'th got Krithmath."

"Where's your mother?"

"Dead."

"And your father?"

"In orthpittal."

There was a laugh somewhere on the outskirts of the crowd. Everyone faced angrily in that direction, but the laugher had disappeared. Yuba Bill, however, sent his voice after him. "Yes, in hospital! Funny, ain't it? —— amoosin' place! Try it. Step over here, and in five minutes, by the living Hoky, I'll qualify you for admission, and not charge you a cent!" He stopped, gave a sweeping glance of dissatisfaction around him, and then, leaning back against the bar, beckoned to someone near the door, and said in a disgusted tone, "You tell these galoots how it happened, Bracy. They make me sick!"

Thus appealed to, Bracy, the express messenger, stepped forward in Yuba Bill's place.

"It's nothing particular, gentlemen," he said, with a laugh, "only it seems that some man called Spindler, who lives about here, sent an invitation to the father of these children to bring his family to a Christmas party. It wasn't a bad sort of thing for

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Spindler to do, considering that they were his poor relations, though they didn't know him from Adam—was it?" He paused; several of the bystanders cleared their throats, but said nothing. "At least," resumed Bracy, "that's what the boys up at Red Hill, Oregon, thought, when they heard of it. Well, as the father was in hospital with a broken leg, and the mother only a few weeks dead, the boys thought it mighty rough on these poor kids if they were done out of their fun because they had no one to bring them. The boys couldn't afford to go themselves, but they got a little money together, and then got the idea of sendin' 'em by express. Our agent at Red Hill tumbled to the idea at once; but he wouldn't take any money in advance, and said he would send 'em 'C.O.D.' like any other package. And he did, and here they are! That's all! And now, gentlemen, as I've got to deliver them personally to this Spindler, and get his receipt and take off their checks, I reckon we must toddle. Come, Bill, help take 'em up!"

"Hold on!" said a dozen voices. A dozen hands were thrust into a dozen pockets; I grieve to say some were regretfully withdrawn empty, for it was a hard season in Rough and Ready. But the expressman stepped before them, with warning, uplifted hand.

"Not a cent, boys—not a cent! Wells, Fargo's Express Company don't undertake to carry bullion with those kids, at least on the same contract!" He laughed, and then looking around him, said confidentially in a lower voice, which, however, was quite audible to the children, "There's as much as three bags of silver in quarter and half dollars in my treasure box in the coach, that has been poured, yes, just showered upon them, ever since they started, and have been passed over from agent to agent and messenger to messenger—enough to pay their passage from here to China! It's time to say quits now. But bet your life, they are not going to that Christmas party poor!"

He caught up the boy, as Yuba Bill lifted

"She led with 'Uncle Dick' a Virginia reel."

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the little girl to his shoulder, and both passed out. Then one by one the loungers in the bar-room silently and awkwardly followed, and when the bar-keeper turned back from putting away his decanters and glasses, to his astonishment the room was empty.

* * * * *

Spindler's house, or "Spindler's Splurge," as Rough and Ready chose to call it, stood above the settlement, on a deforested hill-side, which, however, revenged itself by producing not enough vegetation to cover even the few stumps that were ineradicable.

"'At least that you're no half-niece of his!'"

A large wooden structure in the pseudo-classic style affected by Westerners, with an incongruous cupola, it was oddly enough relieved by a still more incongruous verandah extending around its four sides, upheld by wooden Doric columns, which were already picturesquely covered with flowering vines and sun-loving roses. Mr. Spindler had trusted the furnishing of its interior to the same contractor who had upholstered the gilded bar-room of the Eureka Saloon, and who had apparently bestowed the same design and material, impartially, on each. There were gilded mirrors all over the house and chilly marble-topped tables, gilt plaster Cupids in the corners, and stuccoed lions "in the way" everywhere. The tactful hands of Mrs. Price had screened some of these with seasonable laurels, fir boughs, and berries, and had imparted a slight Christmas flavour to the house. But the greater part of her time had been employed in trying to subdue the eccentricities of Spindler's amazing relations; in tranquillising Mrs. "Aunt" Martha Spindler—the elderly cook before alluded to—who was inclined to regard the gilded splendours of the house as indicative of dangerous immorality; in restraining "Cousin" Morley Hewlett from considering the dining-room buffet as a bar for "intermittent refreshment;" and in keeping the weak-minded nephew, Phinney Spindler, from shooting at bottles from the verandah, wearing his uncle's clothes, or running up an account in his uncle's name for various articles at the general stores. Yet, the unlooked-for arrival of the two children had been the one great compensation and diversion for her. She wrote at once to her nieces a brief account of her miraculous deliverance. "I think these poor children dropped from the skies here to make our Christmas party possible, to say nothing of the sympathy they have created in Rough and Ready for Spindler. He is going to keep them as long as he can, and is writing to the father. Think of the poor little tots travelling a thousand miles to 'Krissmass,' as they call it!—though they were so well cared for by the messengers that their little bodies were positively stuffed like quails. So you see, dear, we will be able to get along without airing your famous idea. I'm sorry, for I know you're just dying to see it all."

Whatever Kate's "idea" might have been, there certainly seemed now no need of any

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extraneous aid to Mrs. Price's management. Christmas came at last, and the dinner passed off without serious disaster. But the ordeal of the reception of Rough and Ready was still to come. For Mrs. Price well knew that although "the boys" were more subdued, and, indeed, inclined to sympathise with their host's uncouth endeavour, there was still much in the aspect of Spindler's relations to excite their sense of the ludicrous.

But here Fortune again favoured the house of Spindler with a dramatic surprise, even greater than the advent of the children had been. In the change that had come over Rough and Ready, "the boys" had decided, out of deference to the women and children, to omit the first part of their programme, and had approached and entered the house as soberly and quietly as ordinary guests. But before they had shaken hands with the host and hostess, and seen the relations, the clatter of wheels was heard before the open door, and its lights flashed upon a carriage and pair—an actual private carriage—the like of which had not been seen since the Governor of the State had come down to open the new Ditch! Then there was a pause, the flash of the carriage lamps upon white silk, the light tread of a satin foot on the verandah and in the hall, and the entrance of a vision of loveliness! Middle-aged men and old dwellers of cities remembered their youth; younger men bethought themselves of Cinderella and the Prince! There was a thrill and a hush as this last guest—a beautiful girl, radiant with youth and adornment—put a dainty glass to her sparkling eye and advanced familiarly, with outstretched hand, to Dick Spindler. Mrs. Price gave a single gasp and drew back speechless.

"Uncle Dick," said a laughing contralto voice, which, indeed, somewhat recalled Mrs. Price's own, in its courageous frankness, "I am so delighted to come—even if a little late, and so sorry that Mr. McKenna could not come on account of business."

Everybody listened eagerly, but none more eagerly and surprisedly than the host himself. "McKenna! The rich cousin who had never answered the invitation! And Uncle Dick!" This, then, was his divorced niece! Yet even in his astonishment he remembered that of course no one but himself and Mrs. Price knew it—and that lady had glanced discreetly away.

"Yes," continued the half-niece brightly, "I came from Sacramento with some friends to Shootersville, and from thence I drove here; and though I must return to-night, I could not forego the pleasure of coming, if it was only for an hour or two, to answer the invitation of the uncle I have not seen for years." She paused, and, raising her glasses, turned a politely questioning eye towards Mrs. Price. "One of our relations?" she said, smilingly, to Spindler.

"No," said Spindler, with some embarrassment, "a—a friend!"

The half-niece extended her hand. Mrs. Price took it.

But the fair stranger—what she did and said were the only things remembered in Rough and Ready on that festive occasion; no one thought of the other relations; no one recalled them nor their eccentricities; Spindler himself was forgotten. People only recollected how Spindler's lovely niece lavished her smiles and courtesies on everyone, and brought to her feet particularly the misogynist Starbuck and the sarcastic Cooledge, oblivious of his previous speech—how she sat at the piano and sang like an angel, hushing the most hilarious and excited into sentimental and even maudlin silence—how, graceful as a nymph, she led with "Uncle Dick" a Virginia reel until the whole assembly joined, eager for a passing touch of her dainty hand in its changes—how, when two hours had passed—all too swiftly for the guests—they stood with bared heads and glistening eyes on the verandah to see the fairy coach whirl the fairy princess away! How—but this incident was never known to Rough and Ready.

It happened in the sacred dressing-room, where Mrs. Price was cloaking with her own hands the departing half-niece of Mr. Spindler's. Taking that opportunity to seize the lovely relative by the shoulders and shake her violently, she said: "Oh, yes, and it's all very well for you, Kate—you limb! For you're going away and will never see Rough and Ready and poor Spindler again. But what am I to do, miss? How am I to face it out! For you know I've got to tell him at least that you're no half-niece of his!"

"Have you?" said the young lady.

"Have I?" repeated the widow impatiently. "Have I? Of course I have! What are you thinking of?"

"I was thinking, aunty," said the girl audaciously, "that from what I've seen and heard to-night, if I'm not his half-niece now, it's only a question of time! So you'd better wait. Good-night, dear."

And really—it turned out that she was right!

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WITH the publication of this number the WINDSOR MAGAZINE enters upon the fifth year of its existence, for, though born in January, it has ever since celebrated its birthday in its Christmas Number, for the reckoning of its growth in volume form. The anniversary is a happy one, for within the past year the WINDSOR has grown in popular favour, not gradually, but by leaps and bounds, until its large circulation of a twelvemonth back hides a diminished head before that of to-day. In celebrating the WINDSOR'S entry upon its mature fifth year, and asking our readers to wish it "Many happy returns of the day," we take what may be hoped to be a pardonable pride in pointing to the striking success of our policy, which has from the outset been to concentrate our energies and resources on the actual contents of the Magazine, literary and artistic. We have held—and the WINDSOR'S success has fully borne out our theory—that the only enduring success in magazine reputations is that which depends, not upon bounce, brag, or sensational self-advertisement, but upon the publication of

THE BEST WORK BY THE BEST AUTHORS AND ARTISTS.

The knowledge that within the covers of a certain magazine it is always sure to secure the newest work of several of the writers whom it most delights to honour must ever have a stronger hold upon the affections of the Public than a wilderness of picturesque posters, an army of straggling sandwichmen, or a fortune's worth of whole-page advertisements in daily papers.

GOOD WINE NEEDS NO BUSH,

and we have, therefore, but to mention in outline a few of the more salient features of the new volume which opens with this number. "Stalky & Co.," the heroes of the latest prose work from the pen of

RUDYARD KIPLING,

whose fine poem, "The Destroyers," but recently brought us letters of congratulation from all parts of the world, make their bow, in characteristically schoolboy fashion, in the present number, and will continue to be excellent company for some months to come. Each of their adventures forms a complete story, but the whole series is united by a strong thread of vividly boyish

MR. RUDYARD KIPLING.
Photo by Elliott & Fry, Baker Street.

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MR. S. R. CROCKETT.
Photo by Russell & Sons, Baker Street.

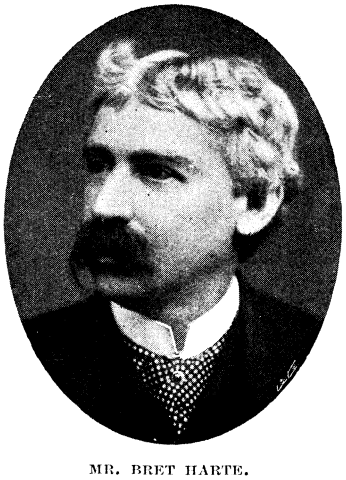
personality. Each story will be illustrated by Mr. Raven Hill, who has made a special study of the local colour of the district. That district, as true Kiplingites will speedily discover, is not a hundred miles from a certain West-Country school which was once an *Alma Mater* to a now famous author. Our long serial by

S. R. CROCKETT

follows up the period of old-world times so vividly recalled in the author's last romance, "The Red Axe," and it may interest our readers to know that Mr. Frank Richards, the well-known *Graphic* artist, who is illustrating the story for us, has travelled through Pomerania in company with Mr. Crockett, for the express purpose of visiting the chief scenes of the drama and verifying its pictorial setting.

Another serial feature will be "Stories of the Gold Star Line," by those deftest weavers of plot and counterplot,

L. T. MEADE AND ROBERT EUSTACE.

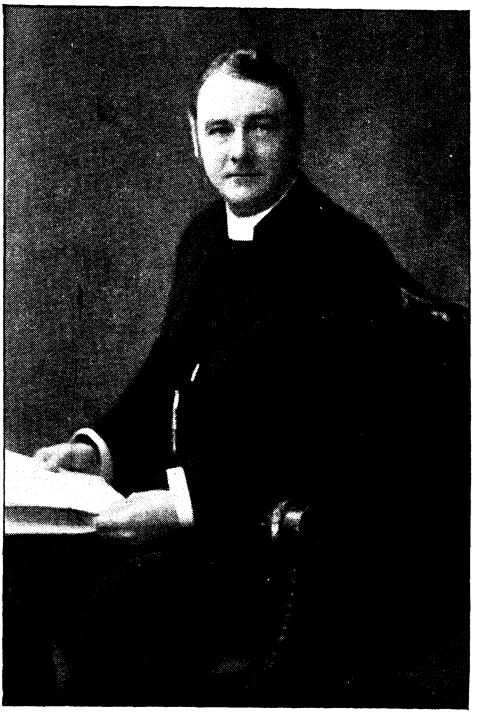


MR. BRET HARTE.
Photo by London Stereoscopic Co., Regent Street.

Each month's narrative will be self-contained, but a connecting thread is supplied by the single personality of the chronicler of the strange events set forth, one George Conway, a purser in the employ of a great shipping line. We have also secured a number of short stories from the sympathetic pen of

IAN MACLAREN,

which will appear at intervals in the course of the year, and the strong humanity, with



"IAN MACLAREN" (REV. JOHN WATSON, D.D.)
Photo by Rockwood, New York.

its mingling of tears and laughter, which has made the name of

BRET HARTE

a household word, has also been laid under tribute. These are but a few of the notable names which will more than uphold the WINDSOR'S reputation for publishing the best fiction of each year.

Amid this wealth of fiction, however, the world of fact will not be forgotten, for it is intended that the miscellaneous articles of each number shall continue to be the most varied, the most entertaining, and the most instructive that enterprise and expenditure can command, so that the realms of Politics, Art, Literature, Music, Science, Athletics, and all phases of social life, public and domestic, may all in turn be explored by our readers under the guidance of leading authorities in each department.

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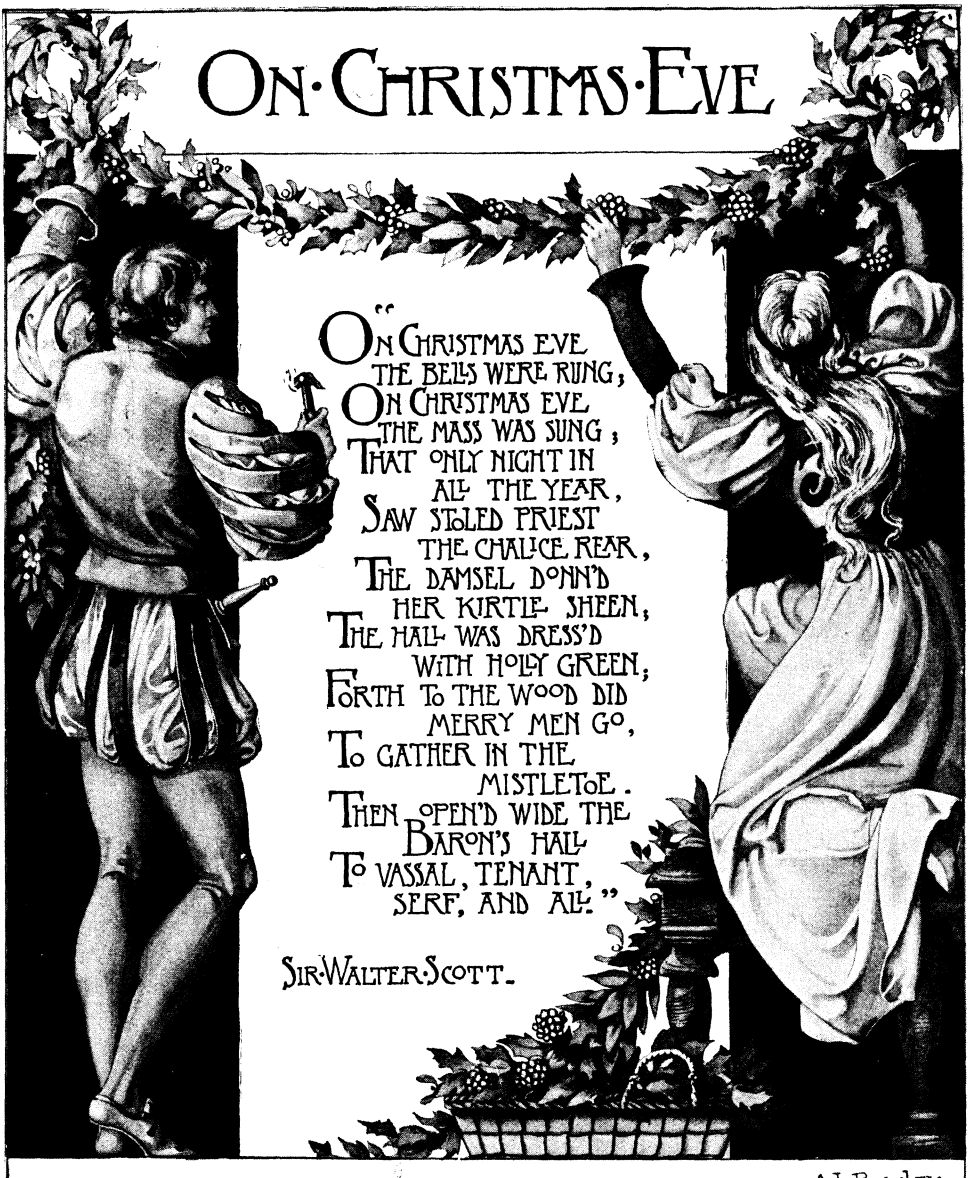
ON·CHRISTMAS·EVE



"ON CHRISTMAS EVE
THE BELLS WERE RUNG;
ON CHRISTMAS EVE
THE MASS WAS SUNG;
THAT ONLY NIGHT IN
ALL THE YEAR,
SAW STOLED PRIEST
THE CHALICE REAR,
THE DAMSEL DONN'D
HER KIRTLE SHEEN;
THE HALL WAS DRESS'D
WITH HOLLY GREEN;
FORTH TO THE WOOD DID
MERRY MEN GO,
TO GATHER IN THE
MISTLETOE.
THEN OPEN'D WIDE THE
BARON'S HALL
TO VASSAL, TENANT,
SERF, AND ALL."

SIR·WALTER·SCOTT.

A·L·BOWLEY.

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Illustrated by T. WALTER WILSON, R.I.

IT was about four o'clock on a fine June afternoon not very long ago, when Tom Venn was at last carrying out his oft-made and frequently-broken promise to admit his sisters Margaret and Kate to his club for afternoon tea. As the three sat together anyone could see at a glance that they belonged to one family. The Venns were a good-looking lot, though there was nothing of the fashion-plate style of beauty about them. Had anyone been asked to say just what it was which caused them to arrest attention, arouse interest, and attract friends wherever they went, he might have found it not easy to answer at once. It was probably the result of the bright, animated intelligence which lighted up their faces and shone from their eyes; the outward and visible sign of a somewhat rare combination—the keenest sense of the ludicrous mingled with unfailing good humour and good feeling.

Margaret was the eldest, her age being twenty-five, and as she kept her father's house (Mr. Venn was a prosperous accountant, a widower, and lived in Kensington) she had acquired a certain amount of restraint, and was at times even gravely decorous. Kate, who was twenty-three, bubbled over with high spirits, and was always startling her sedate acquaintances with quaint, original, sometimes almost staggering views—opinions humorous in conception and wittily expressed, which often proved to be stumbling stones to the dull and the slow. As for Tom, who was only nineteen, he was simply irrepressible.

On the afternoon in question he had been explaining what a panic had seized the older members of the committee of the club when it had first been proposed that ladies should be admitted during two hours in the afternoon to one room in the club-house, provided always that they were accompanied by a member, and that no member should bring more than two at a time. Kate had been particularly lively in her sympathetic comments, and they were all laughing at some flight of her fancy about the poor man who might try to bring in three ladies and then have to select two and reject one on the doormat, when Tom caught sight of a friend who looked in at the door and was about to retreat.

"Hullo!" said Tom, "there's Poston!" and springing up he hurried from the room, captured Poston, and led him back to be introduced. After some little general chat, Margaret discovered that Mr. Horace Poston was a journalist whose duties took him sooner or later, and generally later, every day to the House of Commons.

"Why, Tom!" she exclaimed, "perhaps Mr. Poston can tell us if Mr. Farley's motion will really come on in the House to-morrow."

"Yes, of course," said Tom. "You know Farley, I expect, Poston, he has some blessed motion that he has been trying to bring on in the House for years. It seems to be about things in general, and will be the last word on all sorts of vexed questions. Will it really come off to-morrow?"

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Poston fumbled in his pocket and produced some blue papers.

"I believe he has something down for to-morrow," said Poston, looking through the papers; "yes, here it is," and he handed them over to Margaret. She looked at them and then read the following :—

"NOTICES OF MOTION.

"1. Mr. Ernest Farley.—The Situation.—To call attention to the General Outlook, more particularly with respect to Home and Foreign Affairs, and to move that no settlement of any question affecting either our Domestic, Colonial, or International policy can be regarded as permanent or final unless due regard be paid to each and every aspect of the previous question, and that the time has now come when some steps should be taken accordingly."

"He-ah! he-ah!" exclaimed Tom, stroking an imaginary moustache. "That's just what I've been saying for years to everybody."

Margaret apparently did not hear him. She handed the papers back, and after a moment or two inquired, with an attempt at indifference, "But will the House really feel interested in that?"

Poston took in the situation at a glance. He saw that it would never do to make fun of the affair, and so he replied diplomatically, "Well, you see, Miss Venn, it is not exactly a matter that appeals to the House generally. It deals with first principles, and is—er—well, more likely to attract the experts—the best men, as they are called. I've no doubt they will rise to the occasion."

"Oh, they'll rise, Margaret," broke in Tom; "you watch 'em. They'll be quite sure that the time has come when some steps should be taken, and they'll go for the door, not with steps but strides—by leaps and bounds, like British trade, you know."

Kate intimated that he was only a boy, and beyond knowing that there was a Clock Tower at Westminster, and that you could catch a 'bus at the corner, he knew absolutely nothing about the House of Commons. "That's all that's worth knowing," replied Tom complacently, while that astute young gentleman, Horace Poston, had been assuring Margaret that some really very highly respected members of the House held decided views on the question which Mr. Farley was about to raise, and that a discussion of no little interest and even profit might be expected.

Mr. Ernest Farley, though only thirty years of age, had been in the House for six years. He was tall, well-made, had very black hair, and a very white, clean-shaven face. Each day he was one of the first to arrive and one of the last to leave. No one ever saw Mr. Farley loitering in the Lobby; indeed, only now and then was he seen there for a moment as he bustled through, ignoring the groups of gossippers, on his way to consult Hansard or a Blue-book. When a division was called Mr. Farley was among the first to march into his lobby, and naturally he came out again among the first, stalking without delay back to his place, to put on his hat, fold his arms and cross his legs in true senatorial fashion. He could endure defeat with cool courage; no speech was ever known to bore him by its length, and he even made honest attempts to appreciate the wit of some of his colleagues. There was but one incident of which he thoroughly disapproved, and that was a "count out." He felt it was both unjust and inexpedient that, say, thirty-nine men of capacity should be prevented from doing service to the State because the rest of the House was not alive to its duty.

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that Mr. Farley was a mere dull Parliamentary bore. On the contrary, he was a clever talker, well educated, widely read, and had travelled extensively. He was passionately devoted to music, was a reliable judge of painting, no mean critic of the drama, and a fine shot. Moreover, he had the invaluable gift of making and keeping friends. Nearly everyone in the House liked Farley, and when he had delivered one of his long speeches he was always congratulated by scores of members who had taken very good care not to listen to it. Somehow or other during the last session or two he had seen a good deal of Margaret Venn. Mr. Venn had heard him speak at a public dinner and had taken to him, so he had become an occasional visitor at the Kensington home. Then he had met her at receptions and elsewhere, and gradually he discovered that it was easier to explain his political theories and hint at his ambitions to her than to anyone else. She seemed to understand him, and without in any way ridiculing him she had now and then by a little banter led him to moderate the crudeness of some of his proposals. "Dear Ernest and the public weal" was a never-ending source of chaff for the lively Kate.

Neither of the sisters was surprised, therefore, when the last post that night brought Margaret a note from Mr. Farley, written in

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the library of the House, and enclosing a printed card bearing these words :—

The House meets at 3 p.m. (except on Wednesdays, when it meets at 12 noon).

16th June, 189_.

BALLOT FOR THE LADIES' GALLERY

I have to inform you that you have been this day successful in the Ballot for Two Ladies.

Tuesday, June 22nd.

It was signed by the assistant Serjeant-at-Arms, and in one corner there was written "Sir Reginald Hope, Brt., M.P.," and Mr. Farley's note explained that his good friend Sir Reginald had given him the ticket, and that if Margaret and her sister could be ready at quarter to three the next day, he would be happy to escort them to the Ladies' Gallery.

As they drove to the House on the following day, Mr. Farley was even more grave than usual. He had at last obtained an opportunity for which he had tried in vain during two or three sessions. Margaret's good sense enabled her to see at once that the poor fellow's proposal was hopelessly dry and impracticable, but as he was committed to it she saw that any criticism would be too late, and would only tend to increase his nervousness, which was already almost painful.

They had been in the Ladies' Gallery before, but only towards the end of a sitting, when the House had been almost empty. This time, as they entered during questions, the place was full. All the benches were occupied, and some members sat looking over from the side galleries. Nearly all the ministers were in their places, and they were faced by quite a crowd of ex-ministers on the front opposition bench. Margaret felt that they had all been underestimating Mr. Farley's influence, and even Kate was a little impressed. Towards the end of questions a series of inquiries was put to the Leader of the House, followed by quite an eager outburst of cross-examination, and this, together with the skilful fencing of the right hon. gentleman, gave rise to cheers, laughter, shouts of various kinds, and altogether the scene became animated. "That Mr. Poston does not seem to understand this place, after all," said Kate. At this moment questions ceased, the orders of the day were reached, Mr. Farley's name was mentioned by the Speaker, and that hon. member rose. So did nearly every other man in the House. For one half-second Margaret entertained the wild notion that they had jumped up to give him a rousing welcome. But instantly she

"'That Mr. Poston does not seem to understand this place, after all.'"

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was undeceived, for the members were jostling their way eagerly, almost frantically, to the door.

"What's the matter? is the place on fire? what's happened?" Margaret asked, anxiously turning to a grim-looking lady sitting by her.

"There's nothing the matter," replied the lady; "they always do like this," she continued, pointing at the unconscious victims below with her pince-nez; "they are all off to straddle about in the Lobby or waste their time in the smoke-room." Meantime, poor Farley was speaking in dumb show. Not a syllable could be heard above the

"Mr. Farley was pegging away.'

hubbub, and Margaret said almost viciously, "It's too bad! If I were Speaker I'd make them all come back and sit down and listen."

By this time the exodus had exhausted itself, and some fifteen members were left. One minister was in his place. He fixed his feet against the table and leaned back as if reflecting that, though he must remain, as he was paid to do so, he was not bound to listen. The two sisters had noticed Mr. Poston in the Press Gallery just underneath them. He and all the other journalists had carefully fastened the doors of their little boxes so that they could lean back and sleep in safety—and this they did. Kate was the first to speak, and she said, looking at the fifteen members left, elderly gentlemen with large bald heads, "Well, these may be the best men, as Mr. Poston said, but they're certainly not the best-looking." Mr. Farley was pegging away, every now and then depositing a slip of notes in his hat, enlarging on this or that point, regretting the absence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer (the solitary minister smiled faintly), explaining that he had yet to learn something or other, asking many questions and pausing for a reply. Even Margaret could not deny that it was unutterably dry. The very strangers began to pick up their hats and to retreat sadly. While Kate was listlessly watching some of them she suddenly started and said, "Why, there's Tom!"—and there Tom was, in the Strangers' Gallery opposite, leaning forward with one hand on each knee, his head slightly on one side, a broad smile of delight on his expressive features, and making no secret of his honest amusement. On and on the speech went. Members kept coming in for a moment through the swinging doors. They spoke to the attendant, or looked at the paper hanging near the door, then thoughtfully pulled their moustaches, gazed at Farley in a puzzled manner, and with a yawn strolled off again.

Of course the speech ended eventually, as all speeches do. The fifteen watchful old members who wanted to speak next made ready to spring directly they saw Farley take his papers out of his hat, and before his last remark—affirming his deep and abiding confidence that the time was not far distant when something would be done—was properly completed, the devoted fifteen were all up appealing to Mr. Speaker. Farley sat there for some time, being bound in common courtesy to listen for some time at least to the man who followed him. Then a wild notion came into his head—he would take his two visitors to the Terrace for tea! He had generally regarded the Terrace as a stumbling block to the good member, hindering him in his legislative pilgrimage, as the booths in Vanity Fair hindered some of Bunyan's characters. But it was a fine evening, and he felt sure Margaret and her sister would enjoy the scene out there much more than watching an empty House from a dark and stuffy gallery. With a feeling of something like guilt he made his way to the Ladies' Gallery and released the victims. The lift took them down, and then he led them along corridors lined with solemn-looking volumes,

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"'Man alive!' retorted the astounded baronet, 'it's on your own motion.'"

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then down a winding staircase, past the door of the Strangers' smoke-room, and out on to the Terrace. The change from the dulness inside to the movement, colour and chatter, the ripple of laughter, the tinkle of tea cups outside, was perfect. Kate's spirits went up fifty per cent. at once, though of course both she and Margaret were far too considerate to tell their host how favourably this scene contrasted with that which they had just left. As a matter of fact, he was beginning to entertain some such thoughts himself, and to doubt whether his general views as to the utility of the Terrace might not "with advantage be re-considered in the light of recent experience"—to use one of his pet phrases.

They went away from the crowd and found a table at the end of the Terrace close to the House of Lords, and here they sipped tea and discussed many things. Kate startled the devoted member by declaring that probably more good was done in St. Thomas's Hospital on the other side of the river in one week than was done in St. Stephen's in a year. The proximity of Lambeth Palace and Doulton's works suggested a run of comment and reflection upon archbishops and potters' vessels which drew no protest from Farley, who actually laid aside his hat and laughed. And a few minutes later, when Margaret ventured to question some arguments he had been submitting to the House, he declared quite cheerfully that he believed she was right.

While the time was thus being passed in pleasant idleness, Farley saw Sir Reginald Hope, portly, rosy, wearing the broad, white waistcoat of an easy life, strolling in their direction. Sir Reginald was only a little more than sixty years of age. Nothing pleased him more than to have an opportunity of showing a pretty, well dressed young lady about the House—a weakness of which his excellent wife made fun, and to which he pleaded guilty with the utmost readiness. He was therefore delighted to be introduced to Farley's two charming friends, and to receive their thanks for the ticket of admission to the Gallery.

Now it chanced that the astute Kate had come to the conclusion that poor Farley was dying to be left alone with Margaret for five or ten minutes. Kate was also equally anxious to be walked off to the merry crowd further down the Terrace, and Sir Reginald was thinking how much he would enjoy escorting her. It is not surprising, therefore, that in a minute or two the jovial baronet was off with Kate, and the other two were left alone.

Farley began to sigh, and he made many attempts to converse easily on the various topics which Margaret considerately introduced. It was no good. He had resolved to bring matters to a crisis, and where could it be done more appropriately than within the precincts of the Palace? At length he muttered to himself with desperation, "That the question be now put."

"I beg your pardon," said Margaret, turning to him. He leaned forward, and with a flush of excitement on his pale face began, "I beg leave, that is to say, I mean the question I have to put is——" and here he stuck. Margaret, pitying his confusion, came to the rescue by repeating a remark she had heard in the House, "I think I have received private notice of the question." Farley leaned still further forward, and with greater eagerness than before went on, "Arising out of the reply, may I go so far as to venture to hope——" again a lump in his throat stopped him, and Margaret, while pretending to be much interested in something down the river, murmured, "The answer is in the affirmative."

"The Ayes have it! The Ayes have it!" exclaimed Farley as he leaned back. Everything seemed suddenly to have changed. That steamer passing slowly in front was not to him a penny boat crowded with vulgar Cockneys and bound for Battersea. It was a golden argosy conveying the children of the gods to happy isles in seas of light. The 'bus—a mere halfpenny 'bus—crawling over Westminster Bridge appeared to his enraptured sight a chariot of the sun drawn by immortal coursers. The delicious hum from Big Ben filled the air.

"Division!" roared the constable on duty, and the envious bell raised its hateful jingle. The very word jarred on his feelings, and though from force of habit he had risen, yet a moment later he sat down again deliberately. Sir Reginald Hope came hurrying up with Kate. "Come along, Farley," he called cheerily; "they're dividing."

"I shall not vote," replied Farley, in a quiet but determined voice.

"Man alive!" retorted the astounded baronet; "it's on your own motion—they probably expect you to be a teller."

"No," said Farley, with what may be called desperate calm; "I shall not vote; indeed, I cannot, for I'm—I mean," and here he laid his hand lightly upon Margaret's arm, "we are paired."

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The baronet just managed to suppress a whistle.

The bell was ringing its second summons, and Margaret said eagerly, "Oh, but don't let me interfere in any way with your duty."

"I am by no means sure," remarked Farley, with the same deadly deliberation, "that my recent suggestions to the House were of value. Indeed, I am inclined to think they were not. But, in any case," he added, pushing back his hat almost jauntily, "of this I am certain—nobody need care two straws about the whole matter, either one way or the other."

Sir Reginald Hope sat down, removed his hat and wiped his brow. Then, addressing Margaret, he said, "Let me be the first to congratulate you, my dear young lady. You have managed to do in five minutes what some of us have been trying in vain to do for five years. For, of course, Farley, that motion of yours was the veriest rot. I beg pardon, I mean—well, I couldn't make head or tail of the thing."

"And yet," remarked Kate sweetly, "only five minutes ago you told me nothing would prevent you from voting for it."

"Ah, well," observed the easy-going baronet, "I've known Farley some years, and we all recognise that he's a thoroughly good fellow."

"So that's how votes are decided, is it?" pursued the relentless Kate.

Sir Reginald slowly fixed his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat and replied, "My dear young lady, you should never let considerations of this sort trouble your pretty head. In all such matters due regard should be paid to the circumstances of the case, and to the trend of public opinion, and—er——"

"Ah! that makes it quite clear," said Kate.

In the meantime Margaret and Farley had risen. He was anxious to get away when most of the men were inside voting, and he proposed to drive the two sisters home, a plan which met with the approval of the friendly baronet. They went through to Palace Yard, and Sir Reginald saw them off in a cab. He watched the lumbering old four-wheeler go up the yard and through the gates and join the traffic outside. Then he walked slowly back to the place they had recently occupied on the Terrace. Sitting down, he proceeded with the greatest care to cut the end off a cigar, and then having settled himself comfortably he smoked and communed with himself. "She's a thoroughly nice girl," he said, "and so's that sister. And sharp as a needle, too. I must get my wife to meet them. They'll just suit her, though she'll make fun of me." Then as he watched the smoke drifting up he thought of how thirty years before he had taken his chance in the great lottery and had drawn a prize. His thoughts soon came back to Farley. With a chuckle he went on, "How soon she knocked all that nonsense out of his head! Well, well, well, they call us lords of creation, and the sterner sex, and all the rest of it, but a well-bred, good-looking girl can twist any one of us round her little finger—and a good thing, too."

"Speaker out of the chair!" chanted the constable. Sir Reginald looked at his watch and started.

"Why, bless me!" he exclaimed, jumping up, "I'm nearly ten minutes late for dinner"—and he hurried away.

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The Misletoe Queen.

By Beatrice Offor.

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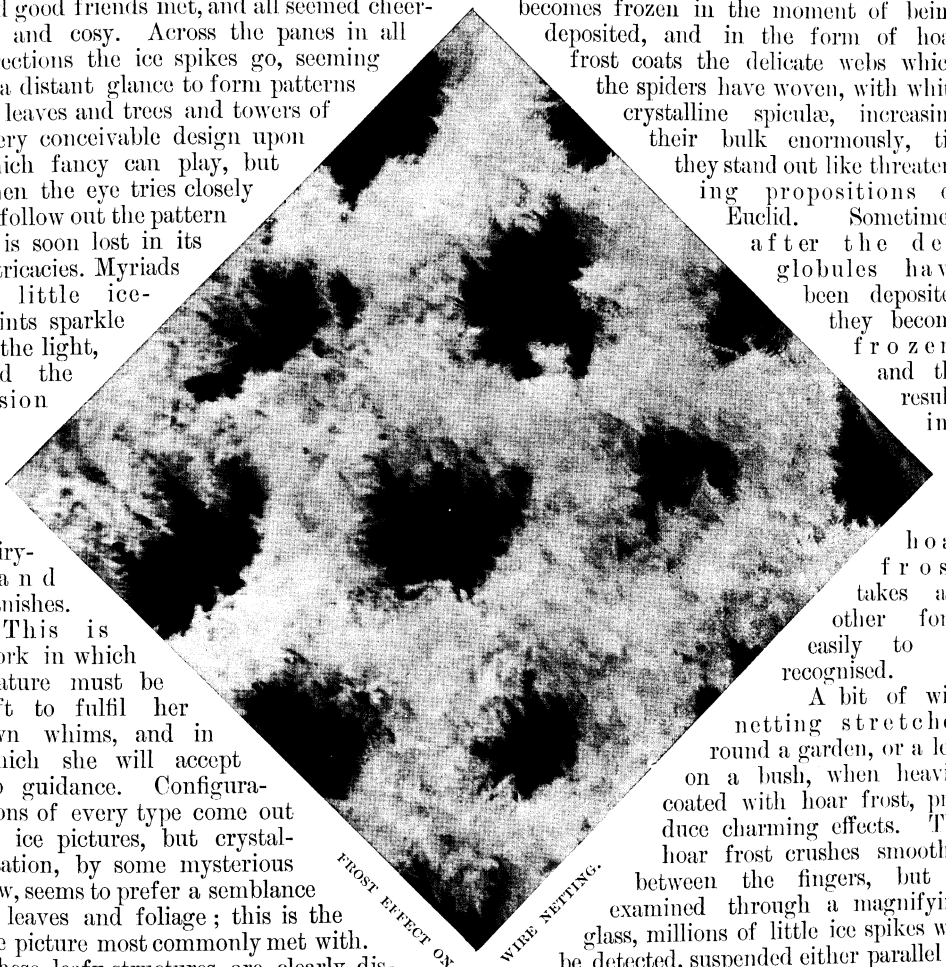
THE FREAKS OF KING FROST.

By H. M. Knight.

Illustrated from Photographs by Underwood and Underwood.

GETTING up in the early morning, one's first indication that winter in its severity has set in, is usually to be found in the beautiful ice pictures which encrust the window panes of the sitting-room, where overnight a warm fire glowed, and good friends met, and all seemed cheerful and cosy. Across the panes in all directions the ice spikes go, seeming at a distant glance to form patterns of leaves and trees and towers of every conceivable design upon which fancy can play, but when the eye tries closely to follow out the pattern it is soon lost in its intricacies. Myriads of little ice-points sparkle in the light, and the vision of fairy-land vanishes.



FROST EFFECT ON WIRE NETTING.

This is work in which Nature must be left to fulfil her own whims, and in which she will accept no guidance. Configurations of every type come out in ice pictures, but crystallisation, by some mysterious law, seems to prefer a semblance to leaves and foliage; this is the ice picture most commonly met with. These leafy structures are clearly discernible on the frosted window pane; but it is impossible overnight to say what pattern the frost will choose.

Hoar frost out of doors produces some of Nature's most beautiful pictures. Nothing is more striking to an observant eye in an early morning walk across the moors in autumn than the innumerable spiders' webs which are found stretched about the undergrowth, deeply laden with dew, the drops of which sparkle in the light with the colours of the rainbow. When a sharp fall of temperature occurs in the evening, the dew becomes frozen in the moment of being deposited, and in the form of hoar frost coats the delicate webs which the spiders have woven, with white crystalline spiculæ, increasing their bulk enormously, till they stand out like threatening propositions of Euclid. Sometimes, after the dew globules have been deposited they become frozen, and the resulting hoar frost takes another form easily to be recognised.

A bit of wire netting stretched round a garden, or a leaf on a bush, when heavily coated with hoar frost, produce charming effects. The hoar frost crushes smoothly between the fingers, but if examined through a magnifying glass, millions of little ice spikes will be detected, suspended either parallel to each other or at various angles, and of all lengths, crossing and recrossing and forming innumerable combinations.

These are, however, but the smaller evidences of the power of King Frost. In forming the icy crystals which make our gardens white with hoar frost, and the ice

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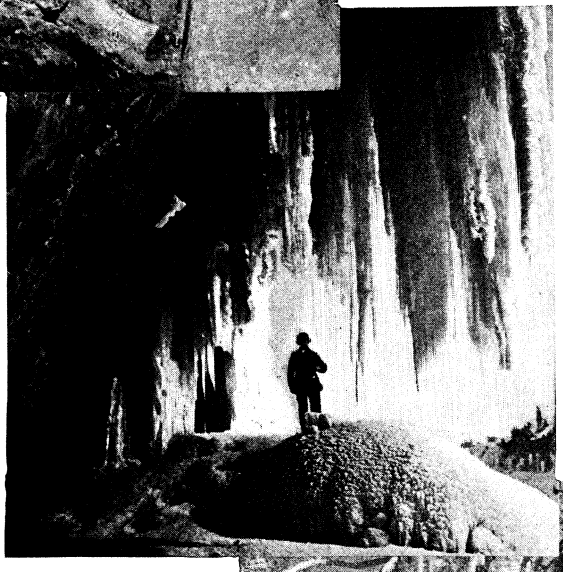
THE FAIRY GROTTO UNDER NIAGARA FALLS.

pictures which decorate our windows, he has nothing but the tiny atoms of moisture contained in the atmosphere to work his will upon, and, slight as are the materials, he yields excellent results. Where running water is met it is very different, for there the grip of frost is manifest in its sternest form. In all the accessible world there is no place where ice making is to be seen on so vast a scale and of so varied a character as Niagara.

No frost, however severe we can imagine it, can stop the stupendous rush of water over the Falls, but as it descends it throws up clouds of spray which in frosty weather quickly congeal and form columns and hills of ice of huge dimensions, and icicles which tower above one's head for thirty or forty feet. The cascade seems framed in glittering white, stretching far away as the eye follows the bend from shore to shore, and its imposing grandeur conveys an impression which cannot be erased.

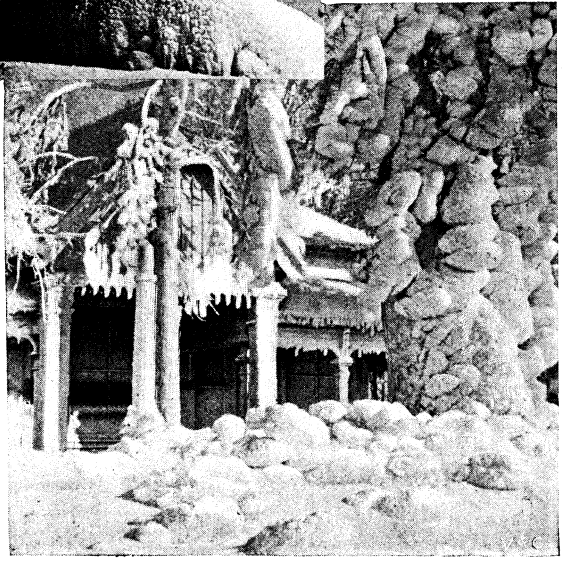
Below the strata of hard limestone, reaching to a depth of about eighty feet, which forms the edge of the cataract, the spray has hollowed out the softer deposits of shale, and formed caves and grottoes to which visitors, well waterproofed from top to toe, can pass without danger. Here the spray bounds and rebounds against the rocks, water drips from the roof, and icicles, clustering close together, lengthen with striking rapidity, until they hang down in the threatening manner shown in the accompanying pictures, seeming to promise destruction at any moment.



ICICLES HANGING FROM THE ROCKS UNDER NIAGARA.

A gigantic ice-column close under the Fall is a feature of every hard winter at Niagara. It is built up by degrees from a steady drip of water, until, if the frost holds long enough, it obtains a circumference of several feet.

From the awful grandeur of



A GLIMPSE OF FAIRYLAND.

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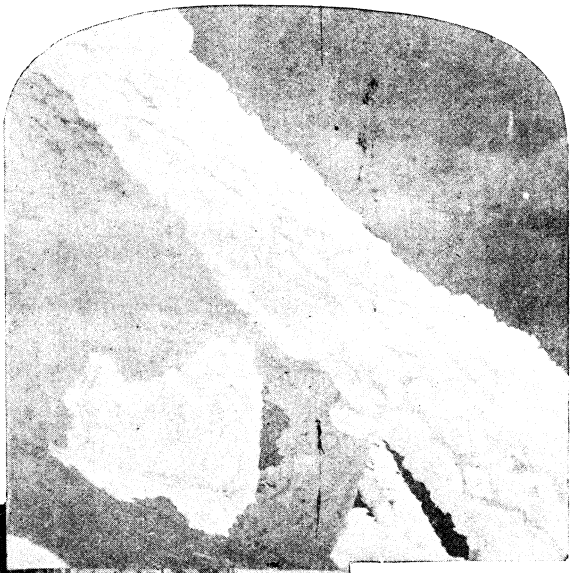
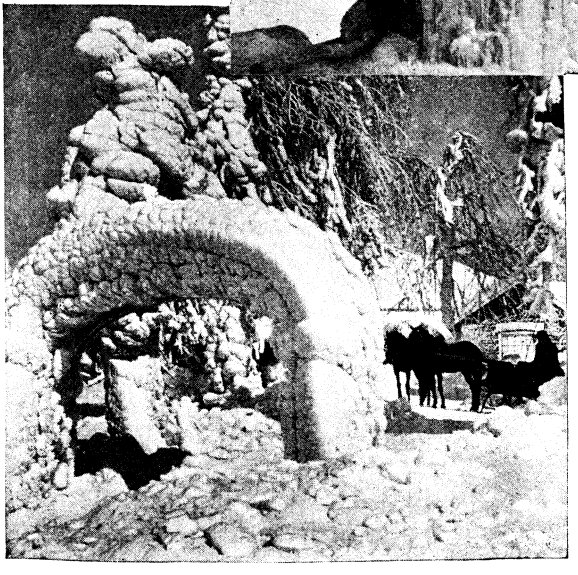
Niagara under its winter guise the eye finds rest in such a scene as the "Glimpse of Fairyland" here depicted. This is a very common winter scene in Canada, or, indeed, in any country where the snow lies deep on the ground, and fortunate are the houses in exposed positions which are not entirely snowed up. What snow can do in adding to the picturesqueness of a garden scene is shown in another photograph, where a slightly constructed arch has been banked up with snow some feet in thickness.

Away in the hills in many countries, are caves filled with ice, which retain a temperature so cold that it never thaws. Teneriffe possesses such a cave at a high altitude, from which the ice supply of the island has been drawn for many years. In earlier times it used to be a belief that water which had lain for ages in a frozen state acquired at last a permanent solidification, and thereto hangs a pretty legend, that the pure and pellucid kind of quartz which is often found on the sides of lofty mountains above the snow line, is really ice which never again will resume its liquid form.



CURIOUS EFFECT OF FROST ON MT. WASHINGTON.

THE MONSTER ICICLE, NIAGARA.



PICTURESQUE SNOW EFFECT.

It may not be generally known, but hoar frost descends vertically. To prove this, a pan may be left out overnight with the lid suspended a foot above it. In the morning the lid will be found covered with hoar frost, but none will get to the pan underneath.

Another very curious experiment may be made with hoar frost. Place a piece of glass overnight about one inch above ground, and it will be found in the morning coated with ice spikes about one-tenth of an inch in length, all arranged horizontally at the edges. Put the same glass flat on the lawn, and it gathers no hoar frost, though the blades of grass surrounding it may be covered.

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The Squire's Daughter.

By St. Clair Simmons.

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STORIES OF THE GOLD STAR LINE.

By L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace.

Illustrated by Adolf Thiede.

No. I.—THE JEWELLED COBRA.

On the afternoon of the 3rd of April, 1886, I, George Conway, purser of the *Morning Star*, passenger steamer of the Gold Star Line, was sitting on the verandah of the Great Oriental Hotel at Colombo. We were homeward bound from Singapore, and the *Morning Star* was lying at anchor about half a mile from the breakwater. She was to leave at six o'clock that evening.

The thermometer on the verandah registered 90°, and I stretched myself at full length on a low wicker chair. The only other European present was a handsome, sunburnt man of middle age dressed entirely in white drill. I put him down at once as a military officer, from the white line of the chin-strap on his cheek. I had been watching him casually for some time and could not help being struck by his manner. A curious, nervous restlessness seemed to pervade him, he kept changing from one seat to another, lighting his cigar and letting it go out, and looking up quickly if any of the servants happened to come suddenly out of the dining-room. There was a keen, alert look in his blue eyes, and a set, almost fierce, expression on his firm, sharply cut features. He glanced at me two or three times as if about to speak and finally got up and came across to me.

"Major Strangways, leaning over the railing."

"Excuse me, sir," he said, "but I think you are an officer of the *Morning Star?*"

"I am," I replied; "I am the purser."

"Can you tell me the exact hour when she will sail?"

"At six o'clock," I answered; "are you going home by her?"

"Yes, and I shall go on board at once; I can't stand hanging about here."

He called to one of the white-robed servants to get his luggage, and in a few moments started off. I thought his manner somewhat extraordinary, but as several passengers came in at that moment, and all more or less claimed my attention, I had to postpone my curiosity for the present.

About an hour later we were all on board. I found the new passenger, whose name was entered in the ship's lists as Major Strangways, leaning over the railing. The anxious look was still on his face, and he watched each fresh arrival closely. At five minutes to six the whistle boomed out its warning of departure, the Lascars were just beginning to haul up the gangway, when suddenly another shrill whistle, repeated thrice, sounded from the shore, and a small steam launch shot rapidly out from the Company's wharf and came tearing through the water towards us. When this happened

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I noticed that Major Strangways gave vent to an impatient exclamation, that he came and leant over the taffrail and looked eagerly out in the direction of the approaching launch. It came alongside, and a girl ran lightly up the gangway. As she did so I observed that the Major gave a sigh of distinct relief; her luggage was hauled up after her, she waved her hand to someone on the launch. Immediately afterwards the quartermaster sang out, "All clear, sir," the engine bells rang, and the *Morning Star* swung round with her head once more to the open sea.

Meanwhile the girl stood silent, not far from Major Strangways; her back was turned to us, her eager eyes were watching the shore. A steward came up and touched his cap—he asked what he was to do with her luggage. She replied quickly—

"My cabin is No. 75; have it taken there immediately." As she did so I saw her face. She was a distinctly handsome girl, with an upright figure and a proud bearing. She was well made and had a look of distinction about her. Her eyes had a ruddy light in them, and her hair was of that red shade which inclines to gold. The whole expression of her sparkling and youthful face was vivid and intelligent, and just for an instant as she spoke to the steward I observed that her lips parted in a brilliant smile. Her appearance, however, bore marks of haste. Her dress, a riding habit, was covered with dust, and her hair was in considerable disorder. The next moment, the steward leading the way, she disappeared down the companion, and I turned to attend to my numerous duties.

That evening, as I was dressing for dinner, the chief steward entered my cabin.

"I thought I would mention to you, sir, that as Mr. and Mrs. French have left, I have given the two vacant seats at your table to Miss Keele and Major Strangways."

"Miss Keele?" I said interrogatively.

"Yes, sir; the young lady who arrived just before the vessel started."

"Oh, that's all right," I answered.

The man withdrew and I continued my toilet. As I did so a smile of satisfaction lingered round my lips. Major Strangways had already roused my interest, and Miss Keele had the sort of face which must attract the attention of any man who has an eye for beauty. I am very fond of a pretty face and have seen many in the course of my numerous voyages. But there was something about the eyes and the whole expression of the girl who had come on board the *Morning Star* so unexpectedly that afternoon, which worried as much as it attracted me. Had I, or had I not, seen that face before? Either I had met it in the past, or it was startlingly like a face I knew. In vain I searched through my memory—the dinner bell rang, and I entered the saloon.

Miss Keele, with all signs of haste and travel removed, was seated at my right hand, and Major Strangways had the place next to her. I gave her a searching glance and, as I did so, almost uttered an exclamation. The missing link in my memory of the past was supplied. Good God! what a queer thing life was! That girl, sitting there in her evening dress, in all the freshness of her young beauty, had stood, three years ago, in the criminal dock of the Old Bailey. Beyond doubt, either she or her double had stood there. I knew now why the pose of the head and the flash in the red-brown eyes had so arrested my attention. It was perfectly true I had seen that face before. On a hot August afternoon, three years ago, I had strolled into the great criminal court at the Old Bailey and had there witnessed part of a trial. A girl had stood in the dock—this girl. I had never heard how the trial ended, nor whether the girl was guilty or not. There she had stood, and I had watched her. What in the name of all that was miraculous was she doing on board the *Morning Star* now?

"I beg your pardon," I said suddenly.

Miss Keele had addressed me twice, but so lost was I in my musings that I had not heard her. I hastened now to push that ugly memory out of sight, and to rise to my immediate duties.

"I am afraid you had rather a rush to catch the boat," I said.

"Yes," she answered, with again that fleeting smile; "it was a close shave, and was all owing to those abominable coolies. You cannot make a native understand that there is such a thing as time. I should have been terribly disappointed if I had lost my passage, as I am most anxious to get home by the first week of the Season."

"Then England is your home?" I said tentatively.

"It is," she answered. "I spent all my early days in England, but I have been in Ceylon, on my father's plantation, for the last five or six years. I have an aunt in London who has promised to take me about, but I only got the final summons to join her at the eleventh hour. Hence my great haste," she continued; "I all but lost the boat."

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"You certainly did," I replied.

Her tone was perfectly frank, her eyes were wide open and unembarrassed. Could I be mistaken after all? Was there another girl just like Miss Keele in the world? But no, I was certain she was the same. There was a peculiar look and power about her face which raised it altogether out of the common, and I had never yet been mistaken in a likeness. The girl sitting by my side was a consummate actress; beyond doubt she was acting a part.

"You speak, Miss Keele, as if you knew Ceylon very well," said Major Strangways; "is your father's plantation anywhere near Kandy?"

"Two miles outside Kandy," she replied.

all, it was not my affair. Perhaps she had been proved innocent, not guilty; perhaps she was to be pitied, not censured. One thing, at least, was evident. Whatever she had done in her past life, she had now retrieved her position, her friends were respectable, and she herself appeared to be quite a lady.

I had just resolved to dismiss the matter from my mind, and was bringing my whole attention to bear upon long lists of accounts and invoices of stores, when, just as five bells struck, I heard a knock at my door, and to my surprise Major Strangways entered.

"I hope you will excuse me, purser," he said; "I want to speak to you on a matter of some importance."

"I gave her a searching glance and almost uttered an exclamation."

"Then you surely know the Morrisons, of Gelpoor?"

She laughed.

"I know them quite well; do you?"

"They are my cousins," he said. "How very curious!"

The next moment the two were deep in a vivacious conversation, exchanging many reminiscences, and I saw that for the present I was out of the running.

When dinner was over I returned to my cabin. I sat down, lit my pipe, and endeavoured to review the position. The girl who had come on board the *Morning Star* at the last moment had, beyond doubt, a past which she was anxious to conceal. Of this I had not the faintest shadow of doubt; but, after

"Certainly," I answered; "sit down."

He seated himself on the sofa, and I pushed a cigar towards him.

"I suppose there is no chance of our being overheard?" he said, glancing round.

"None whatever," I said; "please go on."

"Well," he began, "I am in a very exceptional position, and I want to ask you before I say anything further if you will promise to keep what I am about to tell you an absolute secret from everyone on board?"

"Certainly," I answered, "provided it is nothing which will compromise my position as a servant of the Company."

"It will not do so in the least. You will give me your promise?"

"Yes," I said.

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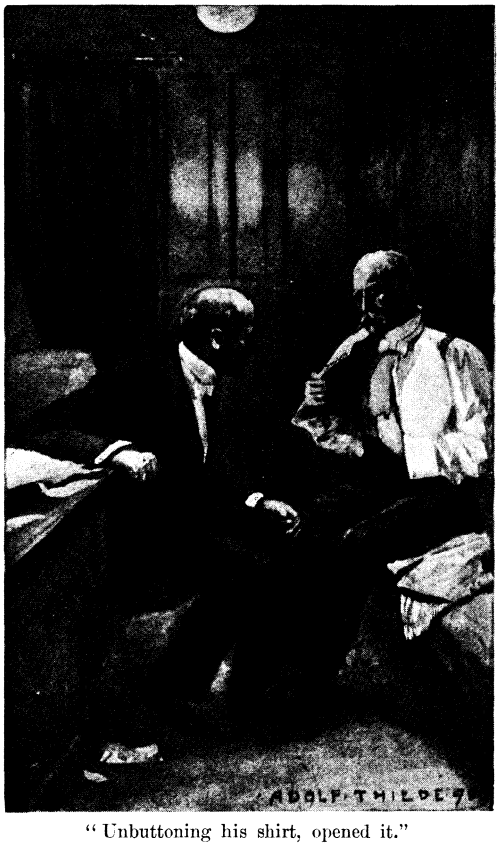
"Well, to begin, I must inform you at once that, as I sit here, I am worth close on half a million sterling."

I looked at him in surprise.

"I do not mean that I myself own that sum," he continued, "but that on my person I carry property to that value."

I waited for him to continue.

"I will tell you the whole story," he said. "I made up my mind to do so this afternoon. It is essential that I should have some trustworthy confidant, for one never



"Unbuttoning his shirt, opened it."

knows what may happen, and if anything should happen to me before I get home, I shall ask you to act for me. Would you mind locking your door?"

"Why?" I asked, looking him full in the face.

"To prevent anyone coming in suddenly. I have something to show you which no one else must see."

I leant over and shot the brass bolt forward, then turned to him again.

"What are you going to do?" I exclaimed, thinking he must be mad. With great rapidity he had taken off his dress coat, then his waistcoat, and, unbuttoning his shirt, opened it.

"Do you see this?" he cried.

"Yes," I answered, as he turned to the light; "what is it?"

He was wearing round his waist, next to his skin, a somewhat broad belt covered with wash-leather. As I spoke he suddenly drew away the outer covering and disclosed underneath a band fashioned to resemble a cobra.

"In this belt," he said, "there are jewels to the value I have mentioned. I am taking them home to England."

"You are doing a very dangerous thing," I could not help exclaiming. "Are you the owner of these valuables?"

He laughed.

"I?" he cried. "Certainly not. Have you ever heard of Prince Sindhia?"

"By name, of course," I replied.

"Well, these belong to him. His father has just died. He and I are very old friends. He is now the Maharajah of Besselmir. He is in London, and this day five weeks is to appear before the Queen at a State function at Buckingham Palace, in order to receive some special distinction. On that occasion he is obliged to wear his jewels, the regalia jewels of his state, and he has commissioned me to bring them to him, making it a stipulation that they shall never leave my person, day or night. It is, of course, a fearful responsibility. I daresay you noticed how nervous I was on the verandah of the hotel this afternoon. Well, I had reason. A fortnight ago I received the jewels from the Maharajah's Palace at Besselmir—they were delivered up to me by the custodian, who had this belt specially made for my accommodation. I had important business to transact in Ceylon, and came across hoping to catch this very boat, and so to reach England in time. I did not suppose a soul knew of the strange wealth which I carried round my person, but yesterday I received a queer communication. A native of Besselmir had followed me from the Maharajah's palace. Last night he thrust a paper written in cipher into my hand. This was to inform me that a certain gang of thieves of world-wide reputation knew that I was coming home with the jewels and had resolved to deprive me of them. In what special way I was bringing them to England was still my own secret, but I was already the victim of a conspiracy, and it behoved me to be extra cautious.

"As soon as possible I got on board and

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stood by the gangway, watching each passenger with intense interest. I was informed by one of the stewards that no fresh passengers, with the exception of myself, had come on board at Colombo, and my fears were just being laid to rest when the steam launch at the last moment shot through the water. I almost gave up hope just then. You can imagine my relief when I discovered that the new passenger was a woman, and not only a woman, but a girl I happen to know all about, for Miss Keele is connected with some of my oldest friends at Kandy."

"Let me look at the belt a little closer," I said. "Ah! what a very curious inner belt!"

It certainly was, being made of countless tiny links of solid gold to give it flexibility, something after the manner of Maltese work. Along its whole length lay a perfect galaxy of precious stones of all sorts and colours, many of which were unknown to me. The glittering blaze of gems was so dazzling that it almost took my breath away. Carbuncles of fiery scarlet lay side by side with amethysts, layers of diamonds, sapphires and pearls. The head of the snake was of exquisitely carved ivory, with an outspread hood of emeralds, and the eyes were two olive-green chrysoberyls that seemed to emit a marvellous opalescent light of their own.

"Well, you are in a strange position," I could not help exclaiming.

"I certainly am," he answered.

"Is it wise to carry the jewels about like that?" I said. "You had much better let me see the second officer and have them put in the bullion room."

"No, no," he cried petulantly; "certainly not. I will keep my promise to my friend, and you have just promised to keep yours. Believe me, the jewels are safe enough. Every extra person who knows of their existence only increases the risk. None of the gang who have threatened to deprive me of my treasure can possibly be on board, and I am safe enough until I reach England."

"All the same, I should not go ashore at any of the ports, if I were you," I said.

"Of course I sha'n't. The *Morning Star* holds me until we reach England, when I shall immediately take the jewels to the Maharajah."

"All the same, Major," I said, "it behoves you to be very careful to give your confidence to no one."

"Whom am I to give it to?" he asked, looking me in the face. "I am not a man to make friends easily, and beyond yourself and, of course, Miss Keele, who is more or less an old friend already, I shall see little of my fellow-passengers."

I longed to say to him, "Beware of Miss Keele," but did not like to do so.

"Well, purser, I have your word to respect my confidence," he said; "you won't breathe a syllable of this to a single soul?"

"You have my word, Major Strangways."

He held out his hand and grasped mine with a firm grip.

I am pretty tough, and few things disturb my night's repose, but I will confess that on that special night my sleep was broken and restless. Major Strangways was in a strange position. He was carrying home on his person what amounted to half a million of money. A gang of thieves of world-wide reputation knew that he was the bearer of all this treasure. A girl had come on board at the very last minute whose face I had seen three years ago in the dock of the Old Bailey. How queer were these circumstances; and what did they mean? But for the fact of the girl's presence I should scarcely have been uneasy. I knew everyone else on board, but what about the girl? If I mentioned what I suspected about her, I should ruin her for ever. Such a statement would amount to slander. Without corroboration it must not be breathed. The girl might be wronged and innocent. On the other hand, she might be what I did not dare to think. Large gangs of thieves have employed women before now for their more delicate work. She was a handsome and most attractive girl—the prize was enormous.

I tossed from side to side, a queer sensation of coming trouble oppressing me. I wished heartily that Major Strangways had never taken me into his confidence. Towards morning I fell into a heavy doze.

The days sped by without anything special occurring, and, in spite of myself, my fears slumbered.

Meanwhile Major Strangways and Miss Keele became the centre of interest on board the *Morning Star*. There is nothing which gives such liveliness to a voyage home as an active flirtation, and we had not left Colombo many days before it was evident to every passenger on board that Major Strangways had lost his heart to the beautiful, bright-eyed, vivacious girl. He followed her about like a shadow, was seldom absent from her side, watched her every movement with burning eyes, was moody and silent when

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away from her, and raised to the seventh heaven of bliss when in her presence.

Miss Keele, on the other hand, held herself somewhat aloof from the gallant fellow's attentions. She acted on every occasion as a dignified and reserved woman, never for an instant giving herself away or letting herself go.

When we reached Brindisi most of the passengers went on shore, and amongst them Miss Keele. Major Strangways, taking my advice, remained on board. He had said little or nothing to me about the treasure which he carried since that first evening, and I observed now that his mind was occupied with more personal matters. The bright eyes of a certain girl were of greater value to him than the most brilliant diamonds which had ever been excavated out of the depths of the earth.

No fresh passengers came on board at Brindisi, and, having coaled, we proceeded cheerily on our voyage.

At Gibraltar, however, we had quite an influx of fresh arrivals, and amongst them was a wiry looking, well set up young fellow of two or three and twenty. The moment Major Strangways saw him he uttered an exclamation of astonishment and pleasure, ran up to him, and wrung his hand.

"Why, Morrison," he said, "this is luck! Who would expect to see you here? I thought you were safe at Kandy."

"No wonder, Strangways," was the eager reply. "When last I saw you I had no more intention of coming to England than I had of flying, but I have been sent over by the quickest possible route on important business, was detained at Gibraltar with a nasty touch of jungle fever from which I have now quite recovered. My father will be much put about at the unavoidable delay, but there was no help for it."

Major Strangways eyed him all over with marked approval.

"I am glad you are better and that you are coming home with us," he said. "This is a curious thing, Morrison. I thought when I came on board the *Morning Star* that I should be amongst strangers, but first Miss Keele turns up, and then you. 'Pon my word, I'm right glad to see you."

"Miss Keele? What Miss Keele?" asked the young man.

"Annie Keele. You know her, of course. She has often talked to me about you."

"But this really is incredible," said Morrison. "I had not the slightest idea that either of the Keele girls meant to come to England this year. I saw them both the night before I sailed. You must be joking, Strangways."

"Seeing is believing," said Major Strangways, turning round and for the first time noticing me. He introduced Mr. Morrison, who expressed pleasure at making my acquaintance.

"I'll just go down and find Miss Keele," said the Major after a pause.

"No, let me do that," I interrupted; "you will like to show Mr. Morrison round, and the boat does not start for half an hour. I will find Miss Keele and tell her of your arrival."

"Be sure you say Dick Morrison is on board; she will know all about me," called out our new passenger. "This is luck," I heard him add; "Annie Keele is no end of fun."

"The most beautiful and charming girl I ever came across," was the Major's answer, and then they both sauntered away to the other end of the deck.

I ran down the companion. I found Miss Keele in the ladies' saloon. She was seated by a small table near one of the open portholes writing busily. She looked up as I approached. One of her idiosyncrasies was always to write her letters with red ink. She was a great correspondent, and at every port we stopped at she had always a heavy mail to despatch.

"Oh, purser," she exclaimed, "I am glad to see you! I particularly want to have this letter posted before we start. It is for Colombo; shall I be in time?"

I noticed a slightly worn and anxious expression round her lips. I spoke abruptly.

"The vessel won't start for half an hour," I said; "but I have news for you, Miss Keele."

"Indeed!" she answered.

"Yes, a special friend of yours has just come on board."

"A friend?" she replied. She kept her composure admirably, but I noticed that in spite of every effort a queer, chalky hue was stealing round her lips.

"A friend of mine?" she said again; "but surely, Mr. Conway, you do not know any of my friends?"

"I have only just made the acquaintance of this friend, but Major Strangways knows him well. I allude to Mr. Morrison—Dick Morrison, he calls himself."

"Dick Morrison?" she exclaimed with a start; "Dick?"

"Yes, he has just come on board; he is going to England with us. He is delighted

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to hear that you are one of the passengers. He will be down in a moment to see you."

"Oh, I must not wait for that," she said, jumping up at once. "Dear old Dick, how more than pleased I shall be to welcome him! What a splendid piece of luck!"

She made a sudden lurch as she spoke against the little table, and the bottle of red ink was upset. It rolled down over the blotting paper, over the half-finished letter, and then streamed on to the floor.

"What mischief have I done? Oh, do send for one of the stewards to have it mopped up," she cried; "I must not wait another moment. I must see Dick without delay."

She left the saloon, walking very quickly; her colour was high and her eyes bright. I waited behind her for an instant to give directions about the spilt ink, and the next moment the sound of a loud crash fell on my ears. I rushed out. By some extraordinary accident, which was never explained, Miss Keele, when half way up the companion, had turned her ankle under her and fallen backwards, her head knocking violently against the polished wood of the floor. She lay at the bottom of the companion now, half insensible. The moment I touched her she opened her eyes.

"Oh, do, please, take me to my cabin at once," she pleaded.

There was a passion in her accents which aroused my sympathy. I helped to raise her—a stewardess came in view, we got further assistance, and the girl was taken to her cabin. Cairns, the ship's doctor, was hastily summoned. He came out after a brief examination to say that Miss Keele had hurt her head and twisted her ankle badly, and that she would have to remain perfectly quiet for the rest of the voyage.

"She must stay in her cabin to-day," said the doctor, addressing me. "Of course, she may be well enough to be carried on deck to-morrow. It is strange how her foot slipped, for the vessel was not even in motion."

I made no remark of any sort, but, going on deck, told Major Strangways and Mr. Morrison what had happened.

Major Strangways' dismay was very evident. Mr. Morrison expressed regret, and said he hoped that Annie would pull herself together and allow him to see her on the next day.

"It is a great piece of luck, her coming over to England with us," I heard him say to the Major, and then the two men turned aside to pace up and down the hurricane deck.

Two days later we reached the neighbourhood of the Isle of Wight. Our voyage was nearly over, and people who had made friends on the voyage were looking forward, many of them with regret, to the inevitable parting on the morrow.

During these few days Miss Keele had remained in her cabin, sending out many

"Seated by a small table, writing busily."

excuses, both to the Major and Mr. Morrison, for her enforced imprisonment. The Major many times suggested that she should be carried on deck, but all his suggestions were negatived by the girl herself, who declared that she was in much pain and would prefer to remain in her cabin. Several of the ladies on board visited her, and their accounts of her cheerfulness, and the brave way in which she bore her too evident sufferings, aroused their admiration.

The last night approached. I had a great deal to do, and went down early to my cabin. I was just about to turn my attention to the ship's accounts when there came a brisk knock at my door, and Strangways entered.

"I thought I'd like to tell you myself, Conway," he exclaimed. "Congratulate me,

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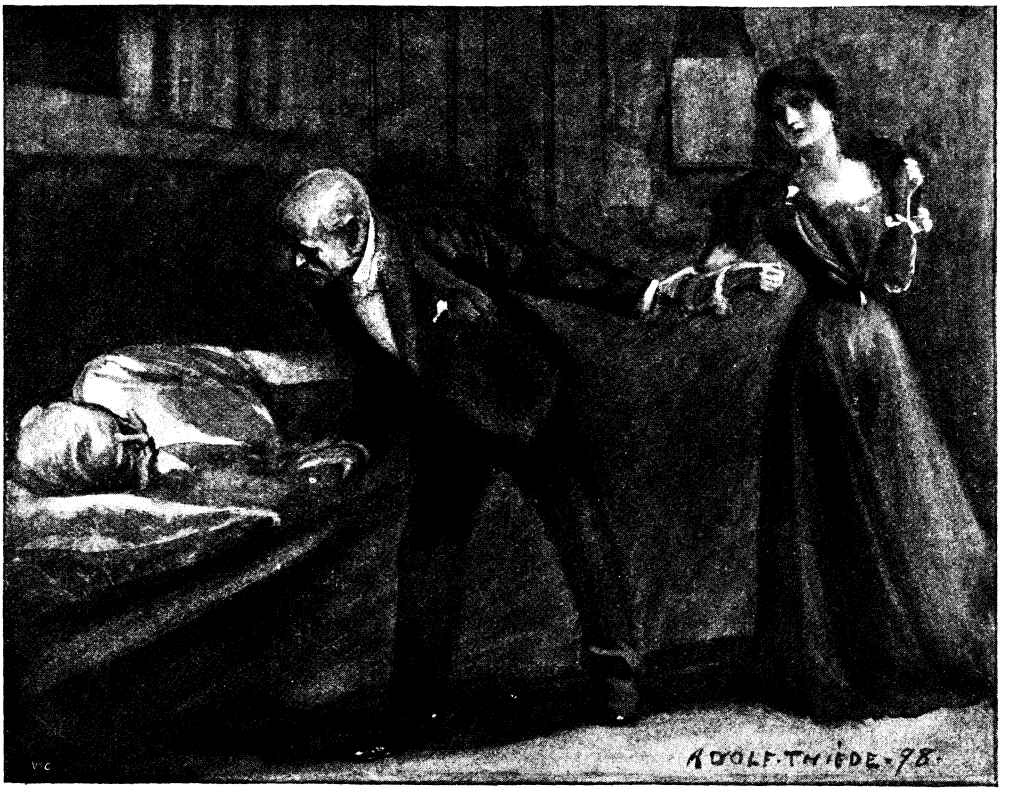
won't you? Miss Keele has just consented to be my wife."

"The dickens she has!" I could not help exclaiming, under my breath. "But how did you manage to have an interview with her?" I said, aloud.

"You know, where there's a will there's a way," was his laughing response. "I wrote her a note, and she consented to see me in the ladies' saloon when the rest of the passengers were at dinner. The stewardess never was anyone like her in the world. I believe Morrison guesses the state of affairs. I must go and tell him."

"What about your belt, Major?" I said suddenly.

"Oh, that's all right. The fact is, I had almost forgotten it, but I have faithfully worn it day and night, and to-morrow, or next day at latest, will deliver it up to the Maharajah. It will be a relief to get rid of it."



"Still holding her arm, I went up to the unconscious man."

helped her to get into the saloon. Did you not notice my empty place this evening?"

"I can't say I did," I answered. "When a vessel like the *Morning Star* is reaching her destination, a purser has a good many other things to consider."

"Of course, old fellow. Well, the long and the short of it is that I have seen her, and she has promised to marry me. I ordered a bottle of champagne for the auspicious occasion, and we drank each other's healths. My God! what a lucky fellow I am! There

"You have not said anything about it to Miss Keele?" I asked.

"Well, no; is it likely? What gives you such a suspicious air, Conway?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing! Of course I congratulate you."

"You well may; I am the luckiest fellow on the face of God's earth."

His face beamed all over; he wrung my hand as if he would scarcely let it go, and left the cabin.

An hour passed, and I must say that during that time I paid very little attention

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to the ship's accounts. Major Strangways' news had produced a sense of intense discomfort, and all my early suspicions were revived. Who was Miss Keele? What was she doing on board the *Morning Star?* Had she an ulterior motive behind those quiet manners and that beautiful face? Beyond doubt she had shown extreme agitation when I mentioned the fact that Morrison was on board. The spilt ink testified to this, also the changing colour on her expressive face, and, still more, the accident which occurred a moment later. Was it possible that the somewhat serious injury she received was not really accidental?

I started up when this idea came to me, blaming myself much for my suspicions, and then, making a violent effort, I withdrew my mind from Miss Keele and her affairs. Eight bells was close at hand, and I turned restlessly to the business which I must conclude before I lay down. I had just got a little bit into the swing of the thing when there came another knock at my door. I muttered angrily under my breath, but said the inevitable words, "Come in."

This time, much to my astonishment, Morrison appeared on the scene.

"Purser, I have something to say; I shall not keep you a moment."

"Come in and shut the door, won't you?" was my reply.

He entered gravely, closing the door behind him. His boyish face looked pale, and there was a startled, horrified expression in his eyes.

"You ought to know," he said, "and so ought Strangways. Strangways has just told me he is engaged to Annie Keele; but, by Jove! Annie Keele is not on board at all! I caught a glimpse of the girl who poses as Miss Keele. She came out of her cabin and limped in the direction of Strangways' cabin not ten minutes ago. I stepped back behind a curtain, meaning to spring out and declare myself, for Annie and I—the real Annie, I mean—have been the greatest chums all our lives. But, by Jove! it wasn't Annie at all; the girl was not even like her. What does this mean, purser?"

"God only knows," I answered. "Where did you say you saw Miss Keele?"

"Limping along the passage, not far from Strangways' cabin. She went very softly, and I lost sight of her almost in a moment. I was so stunned I could think of nothing but to come straight to you."

"You did quite right; and now leave me, like a good fellow; I must look into this matter immediately."

"But what will you do? What does it mean?"

"Heaven only knows what it means," I replied; "but leave me, Morrison, and at once—there is not a moment to lose. No, you cannot help—go, do go."

As I spoke my eyes lighted upon a pipe which Strangways in his excitement had left on my table. I instantly resolved to utilise it—it would give me an excuse to go to his cabin. Morrison had already departed. I now opened my own door softly and went out into the dark saloon, and made my way towards Strangways' cabin. I hurried my footsteps, and when I reached his door opened it without knocking.

Never till my dying day shall I forget the sight that there met my eyes. As it was past midnight the electric light was of course out, but by the light of a reading lamp on the wall I could see Strangways lying half dressed on the lower bunk. His face was white as death, his mouth slightly open, his eyes shut as if in heavy slumber. Was he dead or drugged? What in the world was the matter?

Before I had time to call his name, a rustling sound caused me to turn my eyes in the direction of the port-hole. A woman was leaning out of it. My God! she was the girl who had posed as Annie Keele. Without a moment's hesitation I rushed up to her, seized her arm, and said, "What is the meaning of this? What are you doing here? Speak at once."

"Let me go, Mr. Conway; I can explain everything," was her reply.

"What have you done with Strangways, and where is his belt?" I cried.

Still holding her arm, I went up to the unconscious man and bent over him. The belt, the wonderful golden cobra which contained the priceless regalia of the Maharajah of Besselmir, was gone. Where was it?

"You have robbed this man, and must account for it," I said. "I know all about the treasure which he carries; you are found out, Miss Keele—your game is up."

"No, it is not up," she said, drawing herself to her full height and by a sudden quick movement slipping away from my detaining hand. "It is not up, for I have succeeded. Do your worst; I care about nothing now. I said I would do it, and I have done it."

"But you have killed him," I cried; "you have given him poison!"

"No, not poison; I had to drug him, but he will recover after some hours. I liked

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him too well to poison him. Do what you will with me, the belt is gone, and you will never see it again. I have fulfilled my mission; you can lock me up if you wish."

Without a second's delay I pressed the electric bell. A moment or two later footsteps were heard approaching. The doctor and chief steward were on the scene immediately. I blurted out what was necessary of my story; the doctor bent over Strangways, and the steward took possession of Miss Keele. She was searched, but no sign of the jewels could we find. Her defiant eyes followed me wherever I went, there was a smile round her cold lips.

"I have succeeded," she said briefly; "nothing else matters. I said I would do it, and I have done it."

A wild thought struck me. One of the ways in which smugglers evaded Customs in the old days flashed through my mind. A celebrated and successful trick was the following. The goods were placed in small metal cylinders, which were hermetically sealed. A line sufficiently long to allow the cylinder to reach the bottom of the sea was attached; it was then pushed through the porthole and dropped into the water. At the other end of the line was a cork float to mark the spot. The cylinders were subsequently hauled up by small rowing boats from the shore, and the goods brought to land—thus the Customs were evaded. Was it possible that Miss Keele had disposed of the Maharajah's regalia in a similar manner? If so, was I in time?

I dashed my way roughly through the crowd and flew up the companion like a madman. I made straight for the bridge. Belphage, our first officer, was on watch.

"Man overboard!" I shouted; "sling over a lifebelt."

Immediately something whirled over my head, and before it had struck the water Belphage had roared his orders to the quartermaster, who lowered one of the lifeboats.

"But who is it, Conway?" he cried, as I felt the vessel shake and tremble as the engines reversed.

"Half a million, and I am going for it; thanks for your smartness," was my answer, and I ran towards the davits and scrambled into the boat.

The whole ship was now awake, and the scene was one of indescribable confusion and uproar. The next moment we had shoved away and half a dozen Lascars were laying to the oars as if their lives depended on it. They were making straight for the lifebelt, whose automatic light danced on the water half a mile astern.

"It is not a man at all," I said to the third officer, who was at the helm shivering in his pyjamas; "it's half a million in jewels. Contraband goods trick—steer for the belt, I'll tell you everything afterwards."

"Great Scott! what a game! How did it happen?" he cried.

"You'll see directly. Pull, you Johnnies."

"Atcha, sahib," the Lascars cried, and they bent to the oars, guided by the light that came nearer and nearer. We presently reached it.

"Now, then, you men, keep your eyes open," I cried in frantic excitement. "Pull straight on in the line between the steamer and the belt, and look out for something floating."

I scrambled to the bows and looked right and left. In the darkness across the water a four-oared gig was making rapidly in our direction. Suddenly it paused, stopped, turned, and made as quickly for the shore. The appearance of the gig on the scene made my suspicions certainties. What a fiendish plot it was! But now to find the floating buoy.

The officer at the helm steered in a straight line, and a few moments later I heard him utter a shout of triumph. There was something luminous bobbing up and down on the water. The next instant we were alongside it. The men ceased rowing and I leant over, seized the luminous object, and pulled it in. It was a soda-water bottle, evidently coated inside with luminous paint, and attached to it was a piece of cork. I immediately began to haul in the line that was fastened to the cork. Fathom after fathom came up, and at last at the end appeared what I knew was there—the wash-leather belt which contained the Maharajah's regalia. With trembling fingers I raised the flap of the belt and saw that the golden cobra with its wealth of jewels was safe within. After its short sojourn in the bed of the English Channel it lay uninjured in my grasp. My fellow officer and the Lascars stared open-eyed, as the galaxy of jewels flashed before their eyes.

I explained matters to them as shortly as I could, and we rowed back to the steamer. A crowd of chattering and excited passengers awaited our arrival. The skipper came up at once to question me.

"How is Strangways?" was my first remark.

"Coming to," was his reply; "but I never saw the doctor in a greater funk about anyone.

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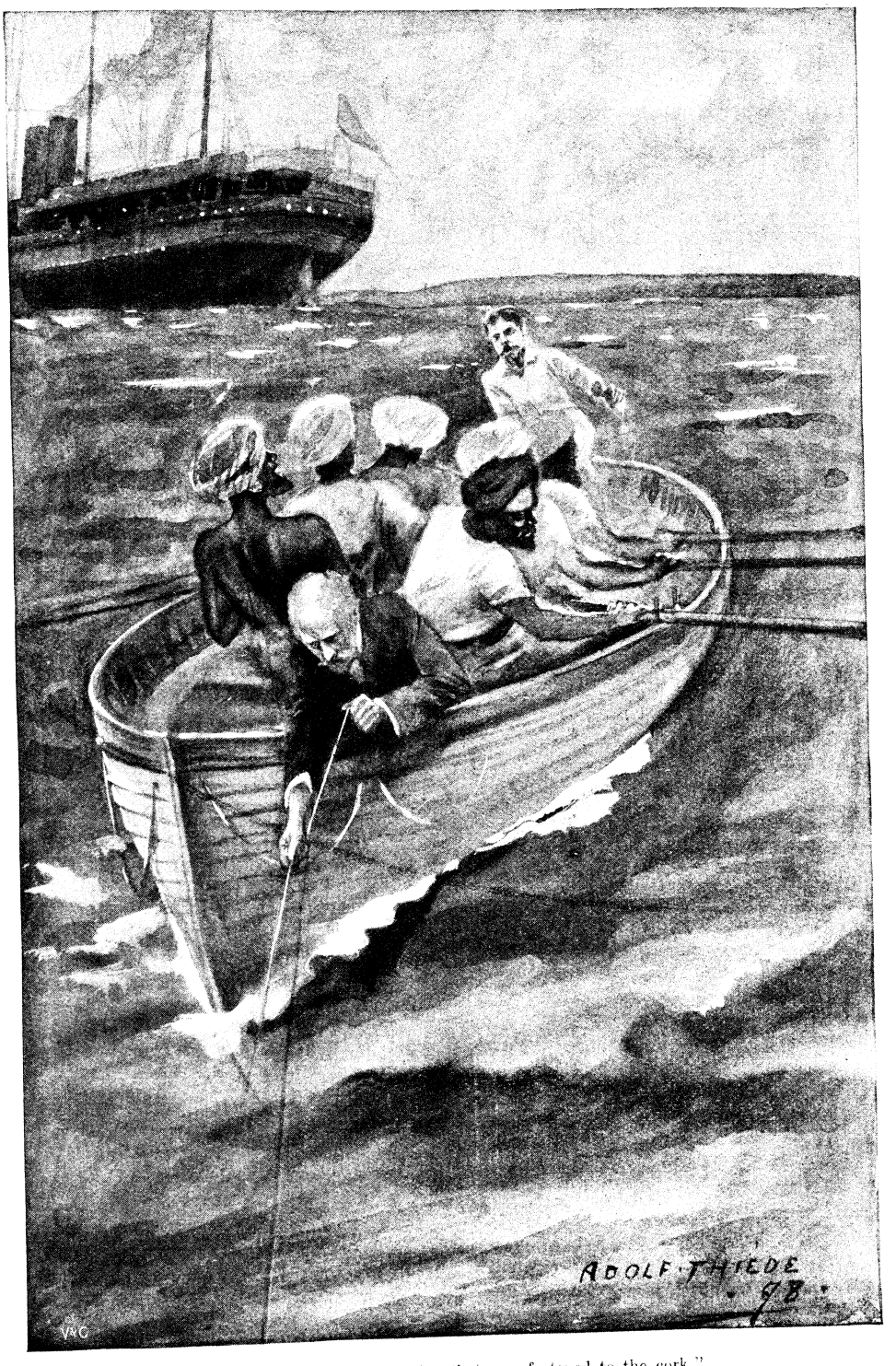

"Began to haul in the line that was fastened to the cork."

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He thought at first that it was all over with the poor chap. The girl has disappeared, though. It is an awful thing."

"The girl? Miss Keele? What do you mean?"

"What I say. She leapt overboard. She managed to elude the steward, rushed up on deck, and was over before anyone could prevent her. We have been searching all round the ship while you were going after that half million. We cannot find her, high or low."

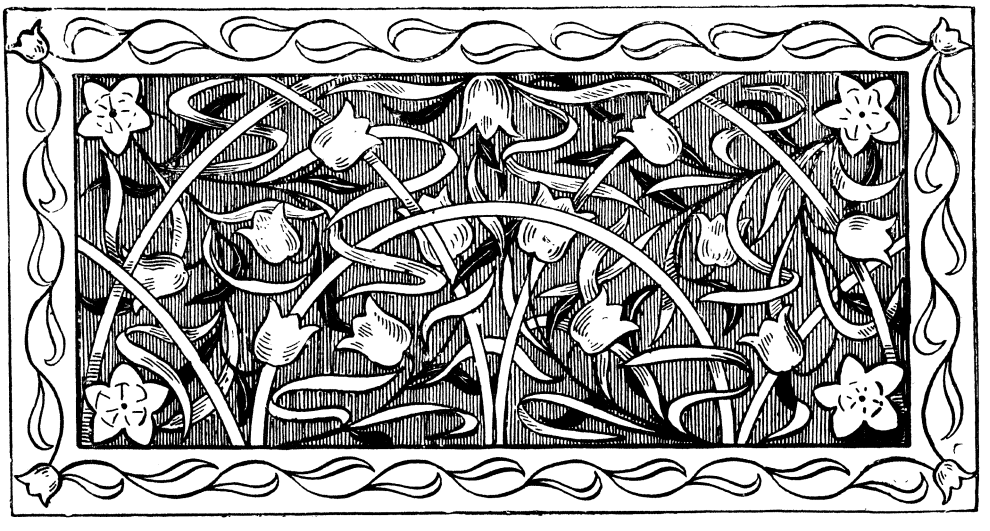
Nor did anyone ever find Miss Keele again, and whether she is alive now or dead is more than I can say. Her abrupt arrival on board the *Morning Star* was only equalled by her still more startling and sensational departure.

"When she heard that you had gone off in the lifeboat she seemed to lose her senses," said the chief steward to me. 'Then he guesses,' I heard her say. 'If he guesses, he will find it, and then I shall have failed.' The next moment she was off like a flash. Poor young lady," he added in a whisper.

I could not help echoing the sigh which came up from the good fellow's throat. But Major Strangways was coming to, and I had to go to him. I told him my story. I found him almost delirious, and even the recovery of the regalia had little or no effect upon him. The fact is, Miss Keele stole far more than the Maharajah's regalia on that unhappy night. Major Strangways has never been the same man since; but at least the jewels were saved.

I went with Strangways a few days later, when he delivered up the belt which had so nearly cost him his life, and Strangways himself told the Maharajah the part I had played in its recovery. The great Oriental thanked me quietly, without demonstration of any kind. Finally he asked me my name and address.

Before I left England on my next voyage I received a neat packet. In it was a ring set with a single stone, a diamond of the first water. I dare not repeat the value which an expert put upon it. It remains when I am at sea in the National Safe Deposit in Chancery Lane—a reminiscence of how I saved the Maharajah's regalia.



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THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK

JES' 'FORE CHRISTMAS.

By Eugene Field.

Father calls me William, Sister calls me Will,
Mother calls me Willie—but the fellers call me Bill!
Mighty glad I ain't a girl—ruther be a boy,
Without them sashes, curls an' things that's worn by Fauntleroy!
Love to chawnk green apples an' go swimmin' in the lake—
Hate to take the castor-ile they give f'r stomach-ache!
Most all the time the hull year roun' there ain't no flies on me,
But jes' 'fore Christmas I'm as good as I kin be!

II.

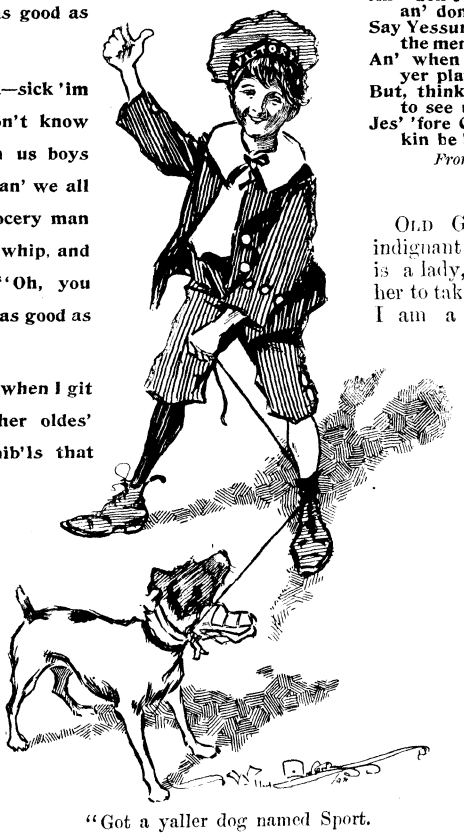
Got a yaller dog named Sport—sick 'im on the cat;
Fust thing *she* knows she don't know where she's at!
Got a clipper-sled, an' when us boys goes out to slide,
'Long comes the grocery cart an' we all hook a ride!
But sometimes when the grocery man is worrited and cross,
He reaches at me with his whip, and larrups up his hoss;
An' then I laff and holler—"Oh, you never teched *me!*"
But jes' 'fore Christmas I'm as good as I kin be!

III.

Granma says she hopes that when I git to be a man
I'll be a missionerer like her oldes' brother Dan,
As wuz et up by the cannib'ls that lives in Ceylon's Isle,
Where every prospeck pleases an' only man is vile!
But granma she had never been to see a Wild West show,
Or read the life uv Daniel Boone, or else I guess she'd know
That Buffalo Bill an' cowboys is good enough f'r me,
Excep' jes' 'fore Christmas, when I'm good as I kin be!

IV.

Then ol' Sport he hangs around, so sollumlike an' still—
His eyes they seem a-sayin, "What's er matter, little Bill?"
The cat she sneaks down off her perch, a-wonderin' what's become
Uv them two enemies uv hern that use ter make things hum!
But I am so perlite and stick so earnestlike to biz,
That mother sez to father, "How improved our Willie is!"
But father, havin' been a boy hisself, suspicions me,
When, jes' 'fore Christmas, I'm as good as I kin be!



"Got a yaller dog named Sport.

V.

For Christmas, with its lots an' lots uv candies, cakes, and toys,
Wuz made, they say, f'r proper kids, and *not* f'r naughty boys!
So wash yer face, an' brush yer hair, an' mind yer p's an' q's,
An' don't bust out yer pantaloons, an' don't wear out yer shoes;
Say Yessum to the ladies, an' Yessir to the men,
An' when they's company don't pass yer plate f'r pie again;
But, thinkin' uv the things you'd like to see upon *that tree*,
Jes' 'fore Christmas be as good as you kin be!

From "The Ladies' Home Journal."

OLD GENTLEMAN (dictating an indignant letter): Sir,—My typewriter is a lady, and I therefore cannot ask her to take down what I think of you; I am a gentleman, and therefore cannot think it; but you, being neither, can easily guess my thoughts.

FRANK: Your father rather likes me, so that's something to our good.

KITTY: Oh, but we can't count on that much—he's only met you once or twice.

A CLERGYMAN recently wrote to a bookseller in a large country town for a volume of sermons entitled, "New and Contrite Hearts," to be forwarded to him by return of post. All he received, however, was the formal reply, "We regret to be unable to supply 'New and Contrite Hearts,' as we are out of stock ourselves, and there are none to be obtained in the town." It is to be hoped that this painful revelation has been brought to the notice of the bishop of the diocese.

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MY NIECE ANGELICA.

By Dorothy Gurney.

TAP, tap, tap!

I turn drowsily on my pillow in that last delicious half-hour of sleep before the servant brings one's hot water, and remember. With the easy kindness which is my one fatal fascination, I had given the children—Agnes the Saint, Jack the Irrepressible, and Angelica the Imp—leave to share in turns that precious half-hour on a Sunday morning.

It is Angelica's turn.

Tap, tap, tap!

"Come in!" I murmur resignedly.

"Are you awake, darling?" inquires a small, peremptory voice.

I open an eye cautiously and look at the door. The sight would soften the hardest heart.

Framed in the doorway stands a small six-year-old person in a sky blue dressing-gown, over which is turned the embroidered collar of her white night-gown. A tangled mass of gold hair sets off the broad white brow and wide-opened, great grey eyes. The rest of the features are small and perfectly formed, but there is a certain squareness about the face and a determination about the chin that argues defeat for any resisting elder. Angelica's family disdain fringes, and she therefore wears her hair in a parting. Two great fluffs of curls are tied with a ribbon just above each tiny ear, giving her a curious look of the thirties.

"How very early-Victorian you are, baby!" I remark sleepily.

"Not at all," she answers, with indignation; "I'm very late! Dinah says I haven't only got a quarter of an hour."

"Well, come in, come in!"

Angelica carefully kicks off two microscopic blue slippers and gets slowly into bed. A rush of cold air races down my back.

"What a long time you take getting in!" I exclaim petulantly.

"I mustn't scrumple my nice new blue dressing-gown," she remarks sternly. I sigh and retire into the further corner of the bed.

"Turn round, you darling; I want to see you!"

Angelica has absolutely no heart, and these endearments invariably preface a petition.

"Tell me a story, Kitty, darling."

No "Aunt," you will remark; Angelica doesn't go in for respect.

"I like that, when you've wakened me out of a perfectly lovely dream! The Queen had invited me down to stay with her at Windsor, and she had asked the whole lot of the Princes and Princesses to dinner to meet me."

"Quite a nice crowd!" interposes Angelica.

"Quite," I continue gravely. "Well, we had had a long, interesting conversation together, the Queen and I, and she had said how glad she was to meet me at last——"

"So she ought to be!" breaks in Angelica fervently. "She ought to make you the greatest poet in the world!"

That is one nice thing about Angelica; she is a standing refutation of the Scriptural doctrine that a prophet has no honour in his own country.

"She didn't say anything about the poetry, but she gave me a beautiful diamond ring."

Angelica looks at my long brown hands anxiously.

"What a pity I woke you! You should have held on to it."

"How? Held on to it?"

"Don't you know?"

A tone of quiet conviction succeeds the contemptuous pity of Angelica's tone as she proceeds to inform me that "If ever in your dreams you get a really nice thing given to you, like a diamond ring, for instance, you must hold on to it very, very tight, and then"—triumph!—"you'll find it in your hand when you wake in the morning!"

"I had no idea of that; I must remember next time I dream."

"Ah, but the trying thing is"—with an air of world-worn experience—"the trying thing is that in dreams you can't fix your mind. Such a very little thought turns it, and then you lose it. I once"—with reviving hope—"*nearly* kept it."

"What?" I inquire.

"A most beautiful box full of pearls and diamonds and rubies and emeralds. I held on tight, tight, till just the last moment, and then I was distwacted, and when I woke it wasn't there."

Ah! my little Angelica, what an unconscious satire on life! We have our ring, our box given us, and we hold on tight, tight, and then—weakness of human nature!—something "distwacts" us, and we wake to find our treasure gone.

"You aren't attending," reproves Angelica. I make an effort towards cheerful objectivity, and ask the small lady if she has other interesting dreams to disclose.

"I once dreamt I woke and there was a great pearl standing by my bed, about so high"—Angelica's small hand rises some three feet from the ground—"and then I heard Dinah say, 'Don't be frightened, Miss Angel, it's nothing to hurt you'; but it was"—here her tone becomes blood-curdling—"it changed into a horrid little skelington in corduroys, and it began to pull the clothes off me. It was a *nightmare*, not a common dream, you see." There is indescribable pride in Angelica's accents.

"I see," I answer humbly.

There is a short interlude of silence, then my niece remarks, "I think you'd better read to me, Kitty, dear."

"Well, there's Kingsley's 'Heroes' on the chest of drawers, if you like to get it. Frank left it last Sunday." My manner is not effusive.

Angelica scrambles out of bed and grasps the volume in question. "Dear, darling Ted gave me this book," she says lovingly.

Angelica is a finished coquette, and I always admire the way in which she goads my flagging energies by the endearing introduction of a rival's name. "Dear, darling Ted" is a capital fellow apart from Angelica, but I get tired of him on her lips. He is an actor by profession, and as Angelica is nothing if not a born "comedienne," I am at discount.

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"What about Maurice?" I ask sternly. Maurice is a tall and fascinating Frenchman, to whose noted wiles Mary has hopelessly succumbed, and with whom Angelica has had many a light flirtation.

"Oh! Maurice"—airily—"is too old for me. I think Ted would suit me better."

"I was under the impression that you were engaged to Felix," I rejoin still more severely. Felix is Angelica's cousin, and for real force of character and lovableness worth Maurice and Gerald put together, in *my* opinion. There is nothing meretricious about *his* attractions.

"'Are you awake, darling?'"

"Poor Felix!" says Angelica tenderly, "I forgot him. After all, I think I must *stick*. I will let the others go and marry Felix. But," suspiciously, "you're going to sleep, Kitty, you're not reading. Finish Perseus."

I turn to the book with a groan, and murder that great hero's exploits and the stately English of Charles Kingsley with a monotonous sing-song. I remark, though, with secret joy that the steady rise and fall of my voice is having a decidedly soporific effect on Angelica. We are getting delightfully near the confines of sleep again, when a second and louder tap at the door rouses us both.

"Quick, Miss Angel, or you won't be ready for prayers."

"It's Dinah," whispers Angelica in awe-struck tones, as she flies out of bed and catches up her blue slippers. Dinah adores Angelica, but she has the genius to disguise the fact from that small potentate. She is consequently the one human being whom Angelica dreads.

She gives a hasty peck at my cheek, "Good-bye, darling, I've had a lovely time," she cries; the door bangs, and peace descends upon me.

MISS GIRTON: Are you also a sceptic? Do you believe in nothing?

LORD JOHNNIE: Haw—I only believe what I can understand.

MISS GIRTON: Ah, well, that comes to the same thing, I suppose.

BRIDE: I'm so afraid people will find out that we're just married that I've made Dick promise to treat me in public just as if he had no thought for anyone but himself.

MATRON: I adopted that plan when I was married, and my husband never got over it.

MISTRESS: Sarah, how was it that I saw you entertaining friends in the kitchen again last night?

SARAH: I'm sure I don't know, ma'am, unless you looked through the keyhole.

TOLD AT THE OBAN CATTLE SALE.

"THAT is so," observed the tacksman from Skye, "there is ferry little doot doctors may be scarce in the Western Highlands; it is not often they will be wanted, and then they will be away to the mainland, or to the outer Isles after fushin'." A pause; bystanders nodded solemnly, two spat, and a third gazed into distance through a wall. "There wass a man fra' Canna—ye'll be knowin' Canna?" (all breathed an acquiescing snort)—"he got a rock on his leg, just an awfu' crush; the hurt was tairrible. So they sailed a boat, an' him in it, to Rum, but there wass no doctor there, an' they sailed to Arisaig, but there wass no doctor there, for he wass away to be marriet, an' there wass some longuage in that boat, for they had to go away round Ardnamurchan for Tobermory; so, when they had cursed the day every doctor man was born, they took all the night and more to get to Tobermory. But as soon as they had the man safe in hospital it was off wi' his leg, for all as it might be a twig, and another day should have been too late.

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"We're hairdy people here, it's so, an' in no few days oot went the boat wi' the man for Canna. 'Fore long he lookit here, an' lookit there. 'Wheer's ma leg?' 'Buriet three days syne,' they tellit him. 'Buriet, an' I no with it? Ye must put back for't then. Dinna ye foresee what talk it wad make gin I were to rise i' Canna wi' ma leg 'mong they folk o' Tobermory?' Aye—and so they juist put back, an' after howking o't up again, they carriet the puir limb back wi' them all the way. An' they made up for't grand! He wass for holding a funeral over't wi' ony amount o' whiskey, so they buriet the leg juist as ye might wish to be yoursel's, an' now he'll sleep quiet, no feared o' wantin' it the right meenut, an' it no' handy."

"But he can never leave Canna, at that rate," objected a mere Scot.

"An' what for should he be leavin' the island?" retorted the Highlander indignantly. But there was no answer.

HE: Will you be my wife?

SHE: The idea! Don't be ridiculous.

HE: Yes, I know it sounds ridiculous; but, then, I'm not so particular as some men are.

"YOUR mother seemed very much amused at that little story I told her last night," he said, self-approvingly.

"Yes," she replied. "Ever since I can remember, mother has laughed whenever she has heard that story."

WYLIE: What's the matter with you, Reiley? Why so furious?

REILEY: Have you read this infernal article about me in the *Evening Hash?*

WYLIE: Why don't you treat it with silent contempt?

REILEY: So I would, if that rascally reporter hadn't mis-spelt my name.

COMPOSERS of oratorios and anthems are not always as discreet as they might be in the arrangement of the words to which they are giving a musical setting. At a certain august ceremony two trebles have been known to sing "And learn to kiss"; two trebles and alto, "And learn to kiss"; two trebles, alto, and tenor, "And learn to kiss"; bass solos, "the rod."

"FOUND OUT!"

Drawn by St. Clair Simmons.

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"The heart knows a secret to keep out the cold."

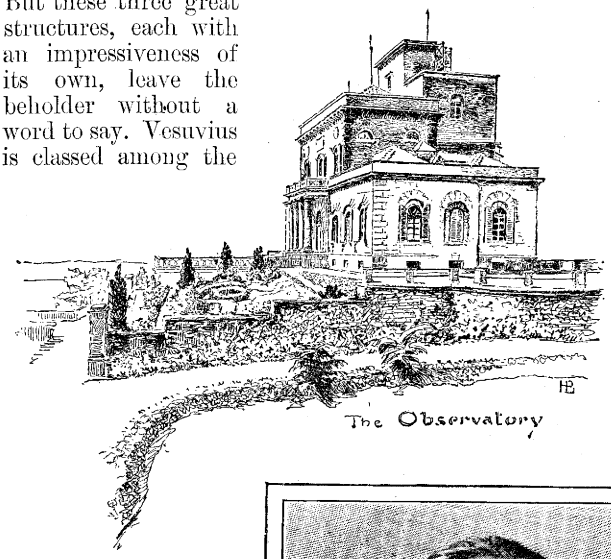
FROM THE PICTURE BY G. P. JACOMB-HOOD.

VESUVIUS THE TERRIBLE.

By H. J. W. Dam.

Illustrated with Drawings made on the spot by C. K. Linson, *and from Photographs.*

THERE are three objects of interest in Italy which are generally regarded by guide-books and other crystallisations of human wisdom as surpassing all tourist expectations. These are Vesuvius, St. Peter's, and the Coliseum. Beauty of landscape, charm of climate, and greatness in art are open to comparison and invite discussion. But these three great structures, each with an impressiveness of its own, leave the beholder without a word to say. Vesuvius is classed among the



The Observatory

structures because it seems to have been lifted above the plain, and kept more or less in constant action by a beneficent Providence, mainly for the benefit of the city of Naples. The Neapolitan will shrug his shoulders, speak of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and point to the string of municipal tragedies, all due to Vesuvius, which line the shore of his beautiful bay. But one must be just, even when the culprit is a volcano; and what Naples owes to Vesuvius it would be difficult for figures to express.

It is a world of lava. The city is built of it and the streets are paved with it. This lava is one of the best building stones known, since it is very durable, costs nothing, and is easily worked by stone-cutters who ask and receive nothing in particular by way of wages. These facts explain the mad fancy of the Neapolitan citizens for stone embankments, hundreds of feet high, which in any other city would be luxuries only possible to millionaires.

Lava is everywhere—in streets of lava, staircases, statues, drinking-troughs, bric-à-brac, and jewellery of every conceivable kind. The innumerable donkeys, even, are lava-coloured, and show other indications of their volcanic origin in their hind legs and voices. These, the invariable accompaniments of the Neapolitan morning, thrill through the soft air like the note of lark or woodbird, but in a different, more Vesuvian key. And Vesuvius is ever before you. It is a pillar of smoke by day and a crescent of fire by night. The smoke comes from the crater, and is now and then lighted by red flashes. The crescent is the lava flood of 1895, still moving, which shows two miles of steam during the daytime, and the same length of glowing redness from dark to dawn.

PROFESSOR SEMMOLA, DIRECTOR OF THE OBSERVATORY ON MOUNT VESUVIUS.

The ascent of Vesuvius begins at Cook's Tourist Office in Naples, where you climb into an ancient carriage. To this are attached three horses,

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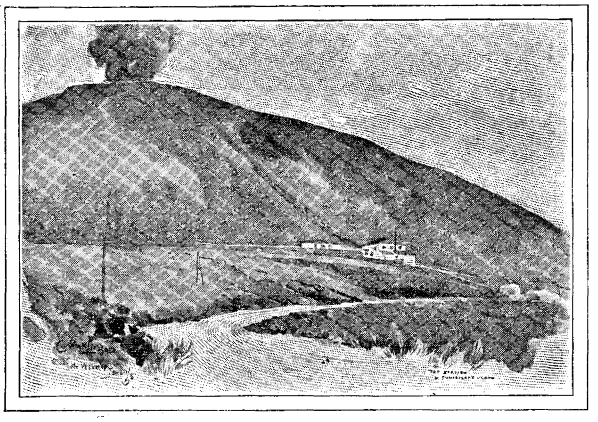

MOUNT VESUVIUS, SHOWING MOUNTAIN RAILWAY AND STATION.

and a driver whose lungs appear to be the chief motive power of the vehicle. They work steadily, and, aided by his whip, keep the horses moving. When the horses fall down, which they do at periodic intervals and in regular succession, his voice lifts them, and he departs into the neighbourhood to borrow a piece of rope to mend the harness. Then you go on again. In justice to the Cook Company it should be said that they do not own these conveyances, but are forced to hire them out of deference to the Neapolitans, whose natural destiny and ruling ambition is driving cabs. This ascent of a mighty peak by Lindau lacks some of the hardships of Alpine mountaineering, but has others of its own. About half of the drive to the Observatory is over streets paved with large lava blocks which theoretically constitute a plane surface, but do not get beyond the stage of theory. Each separate pair cause a bump, to which the carriage springs have long since yielded, and which is received and recorded in your bony framework. The last five miles of the drive are along a winding road, past vineyards and lava huts, with incipient villages here and there. These villages are entirely populated by vocal and instrumental musicians. These, of all ages, from the cradle to the grave, line the road and sing "Funiculi (?)—Funicula" and "Sweet Marie," which has been imported, but has suffered somewhat in passing through the custom-houses. Your driver receives a secret percentage on every penny you spend in lava, wine, milk, or music, and so stops constantly and long in spite of your objections. He says his horses are tired, and this is undeniable. From appearances, they were never otherwise in their lives.

Reaching the foot of the mountain, the road winds upward, cut through numberless overlying lava-flows, which vary in colour from dull black to soft brown as they vary in age from a few years to many centuries. You finally, after three hours and a half, reach the Observatory—a solid, handsome structure of three stories—standing sharply out against the sky, on a spur of the mountain 2,200 feet above the sea. Its various marble-floored rooms comprise a museum, in which the seventy minerals thrown out by Vesuvius are arranged and classified, a scientific library, and various apartments containing instruments. The most important of these is the electro-magnetic seismograph, which records the time, extent, and direction of every movement of the earth's surface, however faint. There are also meteorological instruments for measuring the electricity in the air and electrical phenomena during an eruption. It is from the balcony of this Observatory that you get the first idea of the immensity, horror, and unimaginable force of the mighty vent for the earth's interior fires that towers above.

PORTERS AND DONKEYS AT RAILWAY STATION.

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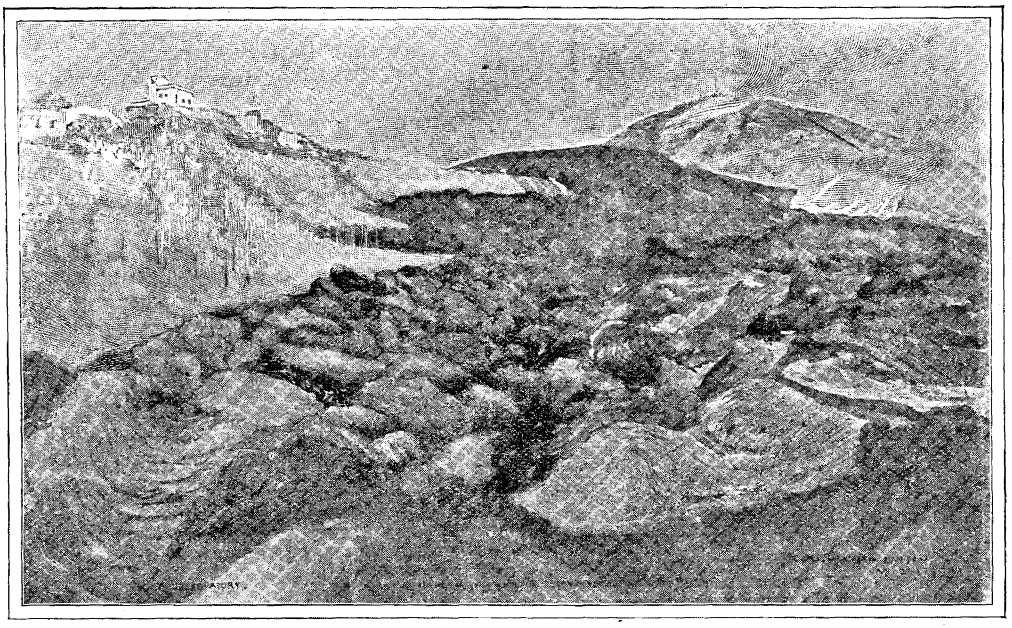
In every direction is a shoreless sea of dull black lava. Its tossing billows, breakers, and hillocks, once white-hot and angry, are now chilled to rigid stone. The eddies, splashes, and torrents of the molten rivers are plainly apparent, and still look soft and pasty, but are heavy and hard, like cast-iron. There have been hundreds of eruptions, large and small, since that memorable day in A.D. 79 when Vesuvius was born and Pompeii died. These have varied greatly in their physical character, at times being a very liquid and white-hot mass that swept torrent-like down the mountain at nearly a mile per minute, and was still so hot when it overwhelmed Torre del Greco, four and a half miles away, that it melted copper, silver, and even flints. It was at this Observatory on the 26th or 27th of April, 1872, that Professor Palmieri, "the father of Vesuvius," stood at his post while two lava floods rushed down the valleys on either side, and the Observatory became an island between two molten seas. It was so hot inside, with all the doors and shutters closed, that the thermometer rose to 178° Fahrenheit. Roasting for all seemed imminent, but fortunately the mercury rose no higher. At this time Vesuvius was hurling out blocks of stone forty-five feet in circumference, sending small projectiles a few thousand feet in the air, and flames and smoke many thousands of feet higher. The mountain roared and bellowed in a way that was deafening, and its fury shook the houses of Naples. The smoke was shot with lightning flashes, and the air full of blazing projectiles which fell in a shower upon the Observatory. Not only the crater, but the black cone itself, half a mile in height, was cracked in all directions, was spouting flames from these cracks, and threatened to collapse into the boiling lake within. The seacoast rose for miles, though not so high as in 1861, when it rose four and a half feet. The mass of the population of Naples and the suburbs lying between it and the volcano piled their household goods into carts, and set off in the other direction, in fear of being overwhelmed. Palmieri had warned them of the eruption, and when he descended from the Observatory two days later, he was greeted by the superstitious people like a god. They fell on their knees before him in the streets and begged him to save them and their children. In another twenty-four hours, however, all was quiet again, except the slow advance of the cooling lava. The mountain was then ascended on the other side, and two large new craters were found in place of the



THE VALLEY DESOLATE, MOUNT VESUVIUS.

The Observatory is on the left; the dark bands over the end of the ridge, in the distance, are lava. In the foreground is the valley, covered with lava from the eruptions of 1872, 1885, 1895, *and* 1898; *the valley on the other side of the Observatory ridge is devastated in like manner.*

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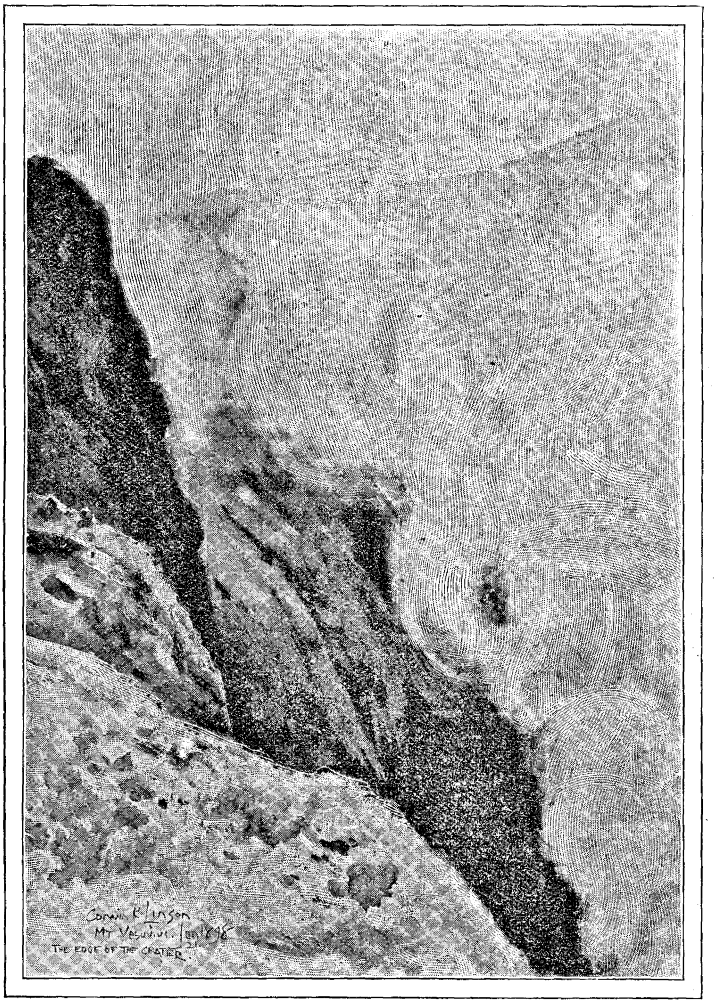
four which had existed previously. It was calculated that over 20,000,000 cubic yards of lava had been ejected in twenty-four hours.

There was formerly a carriage road from the Observatory to the railway-station at the foot of the cone, whence a wire rope railway leads to the summit. This road was destroyed by the eruption of 1895, and tourists have since then covered the two miles by pony transit over a bridle-path across the lava. This bridle-path was practicable on February 5, 1898, but was crossed by the lava flow on the day following. Having traversed it on February 5, however, you bear this news with fortitude. The small ponies used by the tourists are shaggy and docile, and move much like rocking horses. They easily carry travellers of all weights, however, and also drag the donkey-boys by their tails—the ponies' tails. As you jump from rock to rock the air grows rapidly hotter till it is veritably blazing. You have passed over the edge of a wide, slow-moving lava flow, and have become an integral part of an eruption, as it were. It is proceeding, inch by inch, silent and irresistible, from a small crater a mile away in the side of the cone. The lava underneath your feet is as hot as a kitchen stove. It is the dull black colour of the lead in a lead-pencil. It is fibrous, ropy, and glistening like great masses of hot, black molasses candy. Wherever it cracks, the interior is revealed as a thick, sticky, molten mass, and that the whole is still workable and pasty is shown by its onward movement. The heat is almost suffocating.



THE EDGE OF THE CRATER.

The railway station contains a good restaurant, and after fortifying yourself against the staggering experiences that await you on the summit, you take the cable car. The rest of the ascent is mountaineering by rail. You mount rapidly up 1,300 feet along a smooth, precipitous cone covered with a dull black velvety powder. At the small upper station a group of guides are waiting, who offer chairs. It now becomes mountaineering by upholstered furniture, if you wish; but this you decline. The steep, upward path is of the same fine black sand, into which you sink above your shoe-tops. A quarter of an hour or more brings you to the summit, and you now wish for the first time that you had not come. According to expert opinion the volcano is now quiescent. To you, however, it seems to be in a violent state of activity and meditating an eruption at any moment. The cone shakes and

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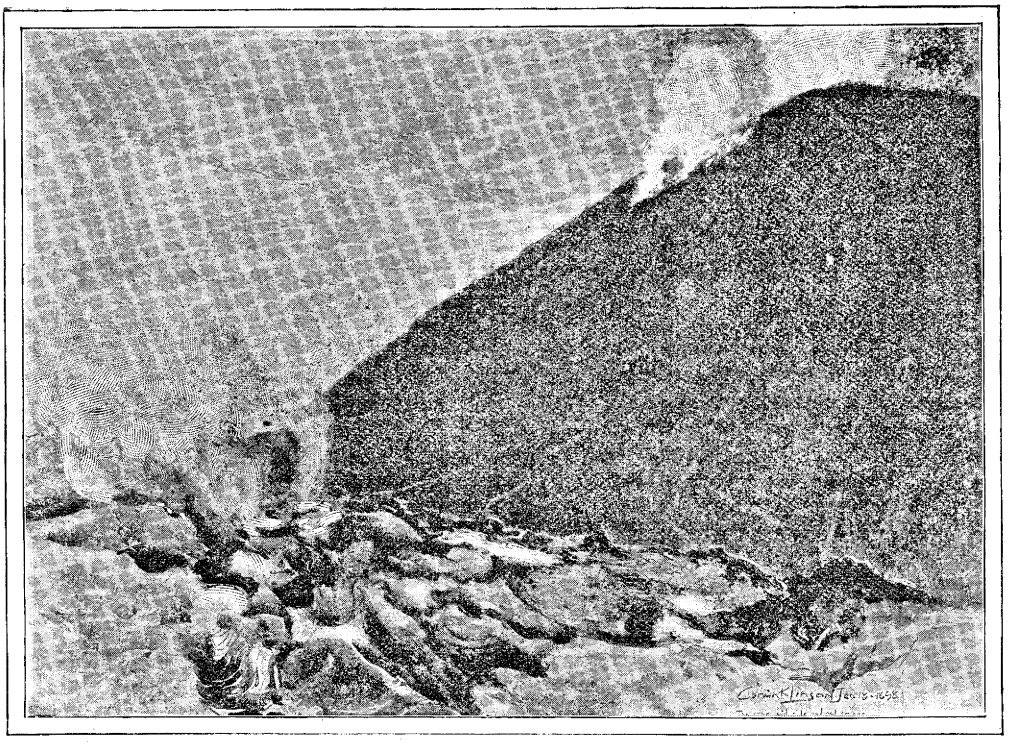
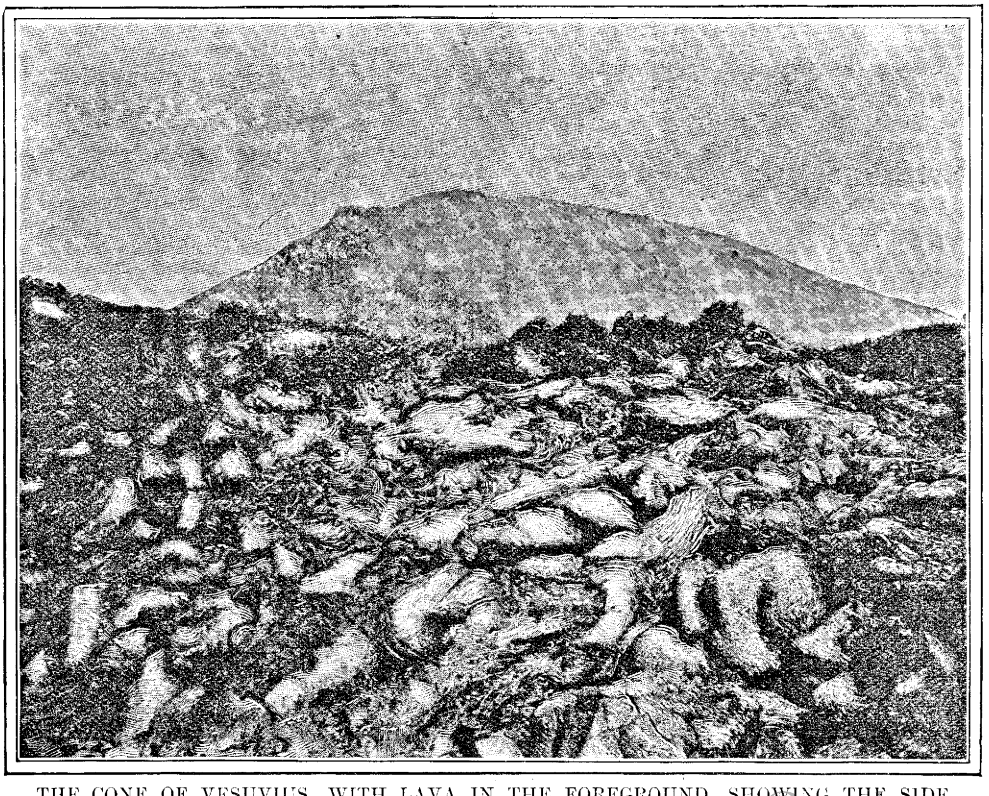


THE CONE FROM THE LEVEL OF THE LOWER STATION, SHOWING SIDE AND TOP CRATERS AND OLD AND NEW LAVA.



THE CONE OF VESUVIUS, WITH LAVA IN THE FOREGROUND, SHOWING THE SIDE CRATER OF 1895, WHICH HAS SINCE DISAPPEARED.

From a recent photograph.

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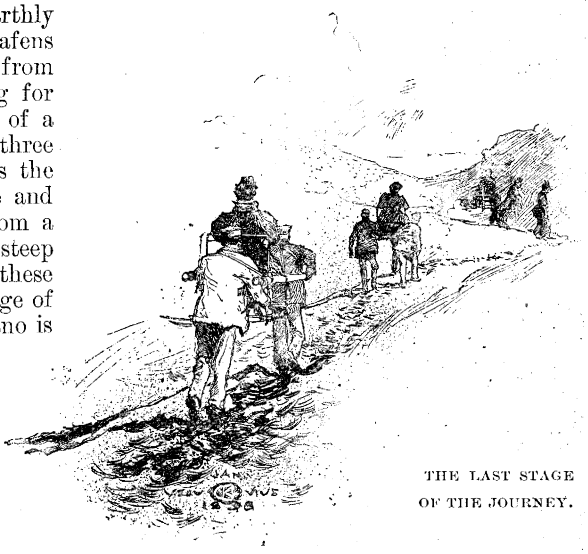
trembles under your feet. A loud, unearthly bellow, followed by a stunning roar, deafens you at intervals, and seems to come from several different directions. In looking for the cause you find yourself on the edge of a chasm forty feet long and perhaps three feet wide, and apparently as deep as the earth itself. From it a cloud of smoke and steam comes rushing like an escape from a 12,000 horse-power boiler. In your steep upward climb you pass several of these "fumaroli," and finally stand on the edge of the crater itself. The crater of a volcano is probably the most awful and most impressive object in Nature that human eyes are permitted to see.



THE LAST STAGE OF THE JOURNEY.

Rushing smoke is everywhere, now mildly enveloping you, and now densely wrapping you in a bitter, choking cloud. When the smoke lifts, you see that you are standing on an irregular ring of black earth, perhaps forty feet wide, which surrounds a black, smoke-filled hole a hundred yards across. This hole is filled with steam and smoke rapidly rushing upwards and concealing its interior and its form. The black sand slopes gently away to your right for perhaps ten feet, and there you dimly see a black, sharply-cut edge, the edge of the awful precipice. As the wind shifts, you are again enveloped in the evil-smelling smoke, and can only shut your eyes and stand still. It is not the place to move about with your eyes shut. The churning, rumbling, and splashing of a molten white-hot lake 600 feet below you sounds constantly. It is the most horrible of all noises. Now and then a red glare flashes from below on the rushing smoke. When you start, choking, to move away, the guide grasps your elbow and says, "Don't go too near." A young Brazilian, in 1886, went too near and fell in. You hoarsely assure the guide that you have no such intention, and prefer to go too near the outside of the cone and fall down into sunny Italy. Then the wind changes, blows the rushing smoke away from the edge, and you get a glance for a few feet into the crater itself.

A GUIDE GROWN OLD IN THE SERVICE.

In its black and hideous grandeur, smoke-hung and fiery, it is like a Doré picture. But it is also indescribably nasty and repellent. The nastiness comes from dirty yellow and dirty white deposits of sulphur or of salt which line the crevices of the black, precipitous walls; and these perpendicular walls, dripping with hot water, look strangely slippery and slimy, like the fabled descent into

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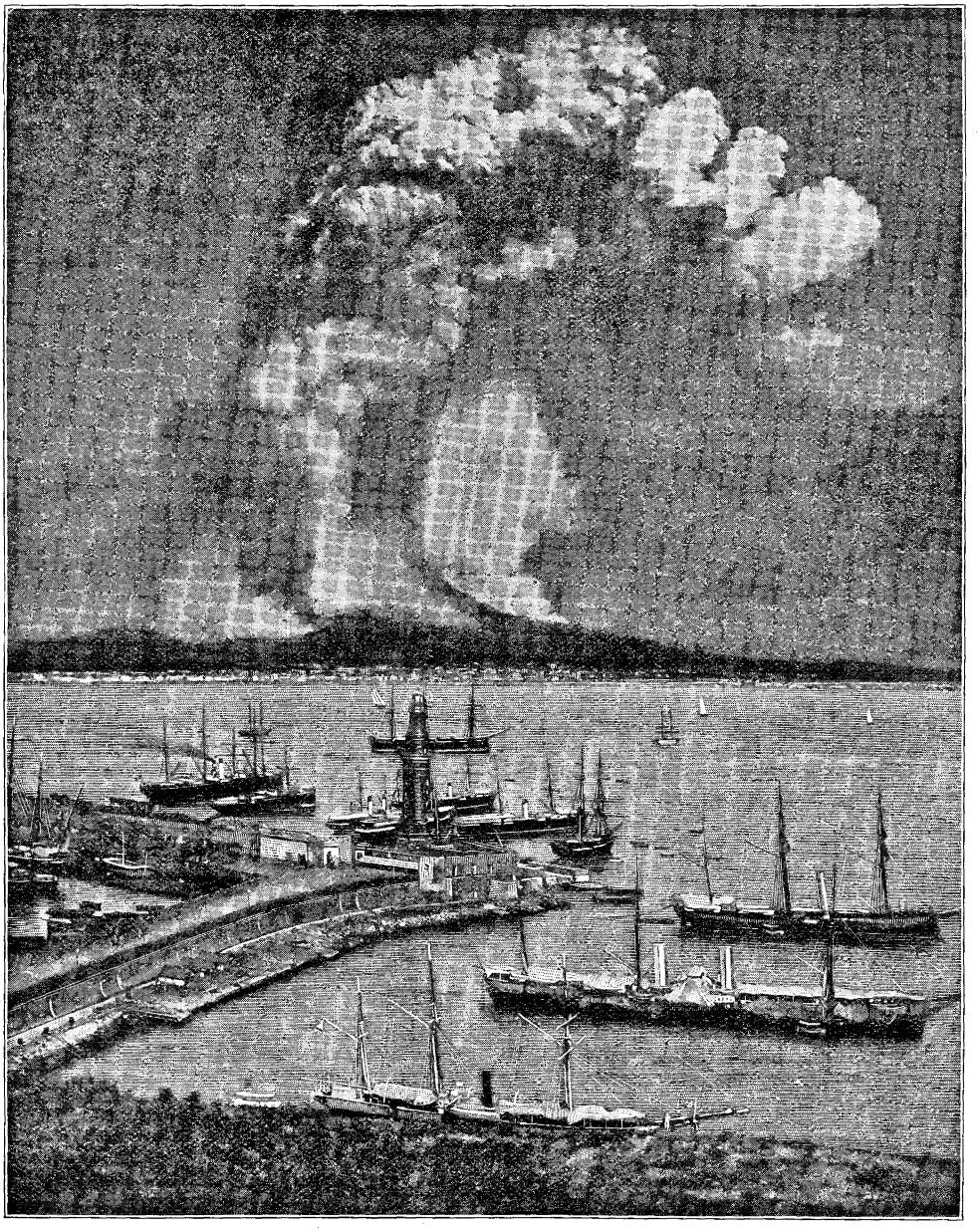

THE ERUPTION OF VESUVIUS ON APRIL 26, 1872, AS SEEN FROM NAPLES.
From a photograph.

hell itself. The crevices somehow look like snarling mouths with dirty, yellow teeth. The walls, dimly outlined in the smoke, are jagged, black, and irregular, but lead straight down for 600 feet. The great irregular oval is 520 feet long and 450 feet wide. This the guide tells you, for you can see only the bits of it near you. Its rim, about which you now proceed to walk, is uneven, jagged masses of rock rising twenty or thirty feet above you, blazing with sulphur or spouting steam through cracks. After finally encircling it, you descend the hill a short distance and sit down to get a supply of the kind of

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air which you breathe ordinarily. And here you forget the crater and are consoled by a view which is almost magical in its beauty.

The green plains and the blue bay lie, like toy plains and a toy bay, at your feet. From the tiny ships to the tiny houses all seem like a nursery model of Nature lighted by a full-grown sun and covered by a full-grown sky. The slope falls away for miles to the water's edge at Torre del Greco, with Resina, Portici, and Naples beyond. To the left, six miles out upon the plain, lies a black spot. This is Pompeii. The little circle of living cities are all bright and joyous, but all have tragic histories. Torre del Greco has been overwhelmed and burnt to cinders sixteen times. The seventeenth town now rests upon the sixteenth lava flow. It is perfectly at peace to-day, however, with the inhabitants lazily strolling about between the curtains of drying macaroni, and the matrons scrubbing their children at the public pumps. The inhabitants have a saying: "Naples sins and Torre del Greco pays." It is difficult to believe, as you look upon the bright and placid picture, that the monster behind you has been answerable for more than 10,000 human lives.

Through all this Vesuvian pilgrimage, from the lava city of Naples to the lava layers that cover mountain and valley, there is a mystery which ever presents itself, which grows deeper and deeper, and which neither guide nor guide-book seem able to answer. Before A.D. 79 there was only one mountain, Monte Somma. Now there are two, twin peaks, Monte Somma and Vesuvius, and the latter is higher than its fellow. From beneath the surface of the earth, therefore, has come lava enough to build several cities and a mountain, and cover hundreds of square miles with lava banks of varying depth. The cubic area of this tremendous mass can only be expressed in billions of yards. The mystery is the reservoir whence this melted rock came, the force that expelled it, and the shape and location of the enormous cavity it must have left behind it; but to obtain a satisfactory answer on these points seems to be impossible.

It was a cherished conviction of the school-books some years ago that our earth was a molten mass in its interior, with a cooled crust outside upon which we dwell. This idea, however, the astronomers and mathematicians long since showed to be erroneous, and it has been abandoned. Our earth is solid and rigid to its core. Otherwise the tremendous tension exerted by the forces of gravity which play upon it would distort it into varying shapes at varying periods. Lord Kelvin showed many years ago, by undeniable mathematics, that if the earth had a molten interior, as was supposed, with a crust of solid steel 500 miles in thickness, the forces of gravity would at times pull it out of the spherical form and contort it as a boy squeezes a soft rubber ball. The molten interior as the source of volcanic action then gave place to the chemical theory. This was the conception that air and water from the surface, percolating downward, and coming into contact with mineral beds of virgin oxides, set up a tremendous chemical action, whose resultant heat accounted for all the phenomena. There was much to be said for this theory, the volcanic explosions being clearly due to water in the form of superheated steam and compressed gases. The objections were greater still, however, as they also were to the intermediate theory of a solid core, a solid crust, and a layer of molten matter between.

It was and is known, however, that the interior of the earth is in a state of tremendous heat. This is shown by the rising of the thermometer one degree for about every sixty feet of depth as we descend into mines and wells. This rising of the thermometer is, however, not regular in any one place, but very irregular in all places. The Comstock Lode, for instance, increases in heat much more rapidly than the deep well at Buda-Pesth; and in the latter, after a great depth has been reached, the thermometer begins to fall. The seismograph, or earthquake recorder, has furnished the most satisfactory suggestion yet obtained. By a series of observations at stations widely separated the area of various earthquakes has been measured and mapped. This has revealed the centre, or starting-point of the earth waves, and these centres vary from thirty to eight miles of depth, which is, of course, a much smaller distance below the surface than the estimated or supposed thickness of the crust. These and other investigations have induced the present belief that the causes of volcanic action are not due to a reservoir of molten rock in the earth's interior, but to local causes operating, in the case of any given volcano or group, over a limited area and at no great distance, comparatively speaking, below the surface.

This is the view taken by Professor Semmola, who, since the death of Professor Palmieri in August last, has occupied the position of Director of the Observatory of

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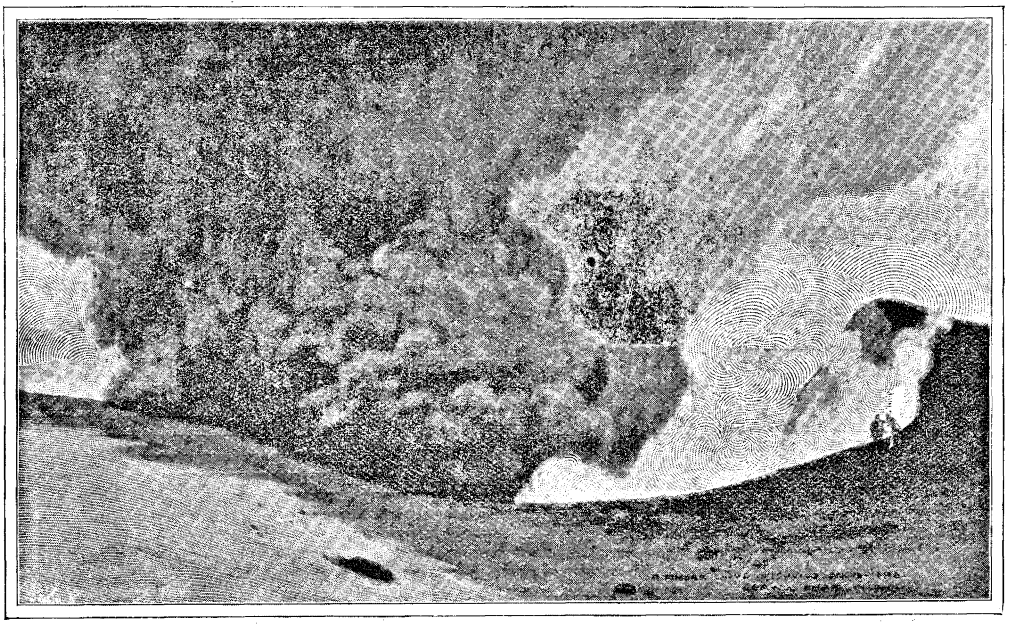
Vesuvius. He is also Professor of Meteorology in the University of Naples, and is credited with a large number of original investigations in this and allied sciences. Professor Semmola is a tall, distinguished-looking man, whose appearance is German rather than Italian. A request for information as to what we do not know about volcanoes brings an invitation to his rooms in the University. He begins the conversation by saying that two reports have gone the rounds of the European press, for which there was no foundation. The first was that Vesuvius was in the last throes, and no more eruptions were to be expected. The second was that science had reached a point of exactness by which future eruptions could be accurately predicted in point of time. Vesuvius, it appears, is as untamable and uncertain as ever.



A CINDER CLOUD ON MOUNT VESUVIUS.

"Even the seismograph cannot be depended upon as a warning," he says. "On the 1st of July, 1895, I ascended to the crater. There was a fairly marked activity, the volcano throwing out numbers of small stones. The seismograph, however, was quiet, and continued quiet throughout the grand eruption which burst out two days later."

"Is there no means, then, of knowing when an eruption is about to occur?"

"That depends upon the character of the eruption; but eruptions vary greatly. In fact, no two are alike. In a normal or ordinary eruption the bed of the crater slowly rises. It rose steadily, for instance, from 1875 to 1878, and the lava then overtopping the brim flowed down the side of the cone. In eccentric eruptions, the action sets up suddenly and violently, and breaks open new craters or blows out the cold lava that fills the old channels. The heat of the issuing lava varies also. It is usually about 1,800° Fahrenheit, but may be much hotter. It remains fluid down to about 1,200°."

"What is the latest theory of volcanic action?"

"We are still working at the old theories, the electro-chemical and that of a reservoir of molten matter below. The lack of knowledge as to the active cause arises from the impossibility of studying the action at its source. Nobody," said he, smiling, "wants to go down into the crater of an active volcano, and his investigations would not reach the publisher if he did.

"We know, however," he continued, "that the interior of the earth still conserves a high degree of heat. Taking the varying rate of augmentation of temperature in descending mines and wells, a distance of twenty or thirty miles would give us a heat capable of melting all known matter. The

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matter forming the earth at this depth is solid through pressure. If the pressure were removed it would at once liquefy, and forced out through a volcano it does liquefy. I am aware that there are objections to be urged against this theory as accounting for all volcanic phenomena, but I give it to you as perhaps the most reasonable basis of a theory that can be presented."

"The idea of the molten interior of the earth is no longer entertained?"

"No. Even without the unanswerable objections of astronomy and mathematics the idea is not tenable; other facts disprove it. The belief prevailed for some time that the periods of greatest activity of Vesuvius were coincident with those of the moon's greatest attraction. I investigated this question very thoroughly both by observations for two years and an extended comparison of past records of the moon and the volcano. It became fully evident that no variations whatever in activity were to be attributed to the moon's phases. Were there a molten interior, this, of course, could not be so."

"What mechanical power seems to be responsible for the tremendous force of the eruptions?"

"Steam, superheated, under great pressure. Given matter at a high degree of heat, and water which by some means reaches it, and you have a sufficient physical force to account for all the work done. That water plays a very important part in the eruptions is clearly evident. In some eruptions of Vesuvius an enormous amount of water has been thrown out. The eccentric action of the sea, and of the wells and springs in the surrounding country, established an obvious relation. Many unofficial records of past eruptions describe the sinking of the sea, fish stranded on the shores thus laid bare, etc. Palmieri, however, came to the conclusion, based on his investigation of the eruption of 1861, that it was not the sea that sank, but the coast that lifted. He found that, in the eruption, the coast was lifted for several miles, the highest elevation being at Torre del Greco, where the elevation was four feet and a half. It slowly sank to its former level, but two years afterwards had not quite attained it.

"This explosive and eruptive action of water is shown," he added, "whenever a lava flood passes over a spring. A miniature volcano forms and spouts. The water turns to steam, and this, superheated and confined, bears the superincumbent weight only as long as it is unable to lift it. When the amount and power of the steam is equal to the demand, it erupts with violence through the lava flood and gives us a small volcano. After an eruption of Vesuvius, the lava which has cooled fills all the canals and vents leading from below. The steam and other gases which form below are thus unable to escape, and may go on augmenting in force for a long period. When the force of expansion attains the bursting point, it either blows out the old vents or forces new ones, sometimes in the volcano, and sometimes elsewhere, as when the new volcano of Monte Nuovo appeared above Pozzuoli in 1538. The so-called smoke from Vesuvius is almost entirely steam. Steam is absorbed by the lava before eruption, under great pressure, and is given off for long periods, as has been the case with the lava stream on the mountain for many months past."

"How deep, then, do you think the centre of activity of Vesuvius lies?"

"I can only give you my opinion, and an opinion does not call for a demonstration. I think it is a matter of miles, perhaps ten, but probably less."

The mystery of the volcano remains still, therefore, the mystery of the earth itself; and we shall understand the one only when we understand the other. It looks, however, as if the genial earth, which bears us so tirelessly in our annual excursions through space, had little skin troubles of the same general character as those which we describe in other people as eruptions. But the enormous heat and force of Vesuvius, only utilised thus far in supplying building stone and destroying buildings, recall practically the prophecy of Professor Bertholot, that in the golden age that is coming we shall draw all our heat, and the mechanical forces which result from its conversion, directly from the earth itself—that instead of digging 2,000 feet for coal, we shall dig a little farther when the coal gives out, and bring up the heat itself by thermo-electric methods. This is so far from being impossible that the Hungarians, a very advanced and active people, have begun an enterprise of this kind, and seem likely to succeed. Having harnessed the waterfalls and set the tides at doing days' work, this would seem to be the next step in mechanical progress, unless Tesla and his co-labourers should crown their present efforts with full success and draw all needed power from the streams of force that play about us, ready, when mastered, to do all the work of man.

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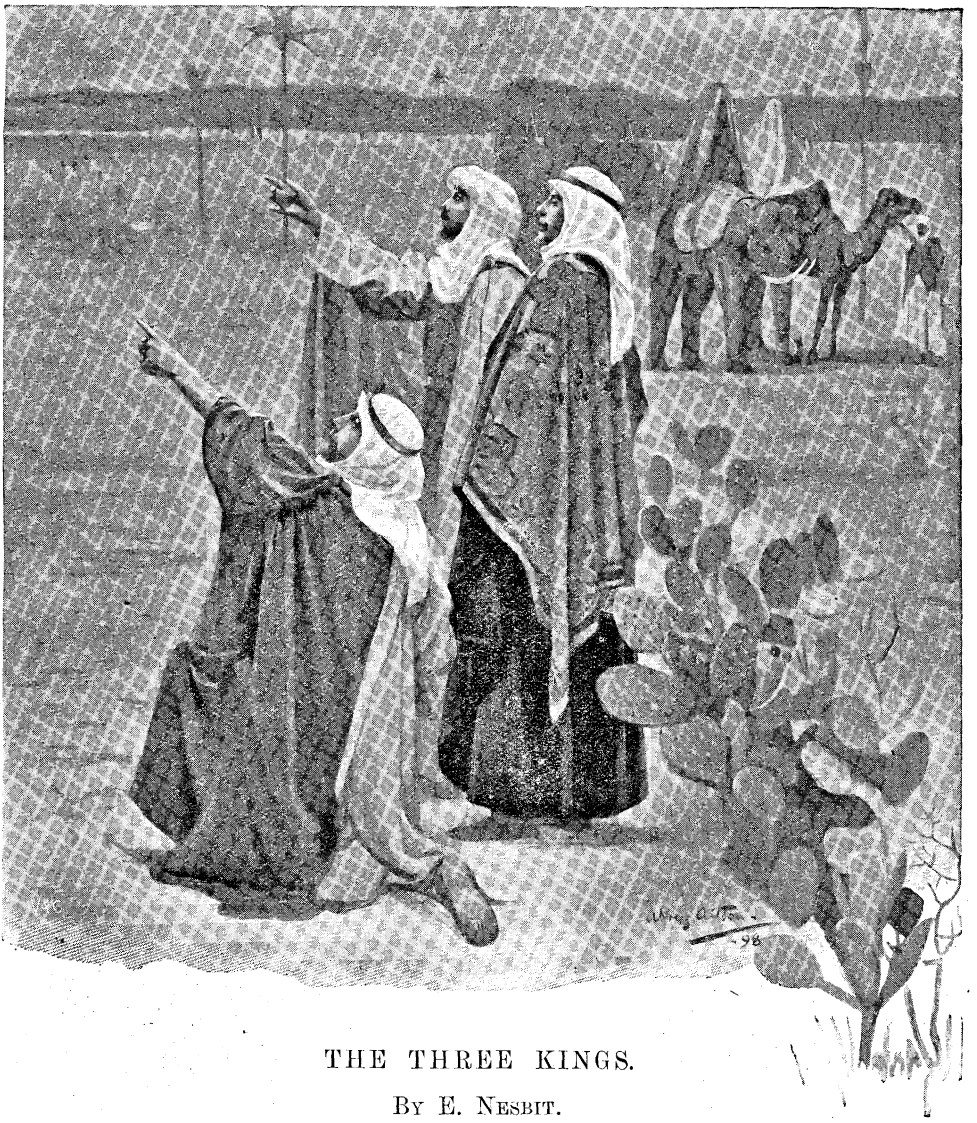

THE THREE KINGS.

By E. Nesbit.

When the Star in the East was lit to shine,
The three kings journeyed to Palestine:

They came from the uttermost parts of earth,
With long trains laden with gifts of worth.

The first king rode on a camel's back;
He came from the land where the kings are black,

Bringing treasure desired of kings,
Rubies and ivory and precious things.

An elephant carried the second king;
He came from the land of the sun rising,

And gems and gold and spices he bare,
With broidered raiment for kings to wear.

The third king came, without steed or train,
From the misty land where the white kings reign;

He bore no gift save the myrrh in his hand,
For he came hot-foot from a far-off land.

Now, when they had journeyed a many days
Through grievous forests and desert ways,

By angry seas and by paths thorn-set,
On Christmas vigil the three kings met;

And over their meeting a cloud-palled sky
Made dark the star they had travelled by.

Then the first king was wroth: he frowned and he said,
"By some ill spell have our feet been led:

"Now I see in the darkness the fools we are
"To have followed the light of a lying star.

"Let us fool no more, but, like kings and men,
"Each get him home to his land again."

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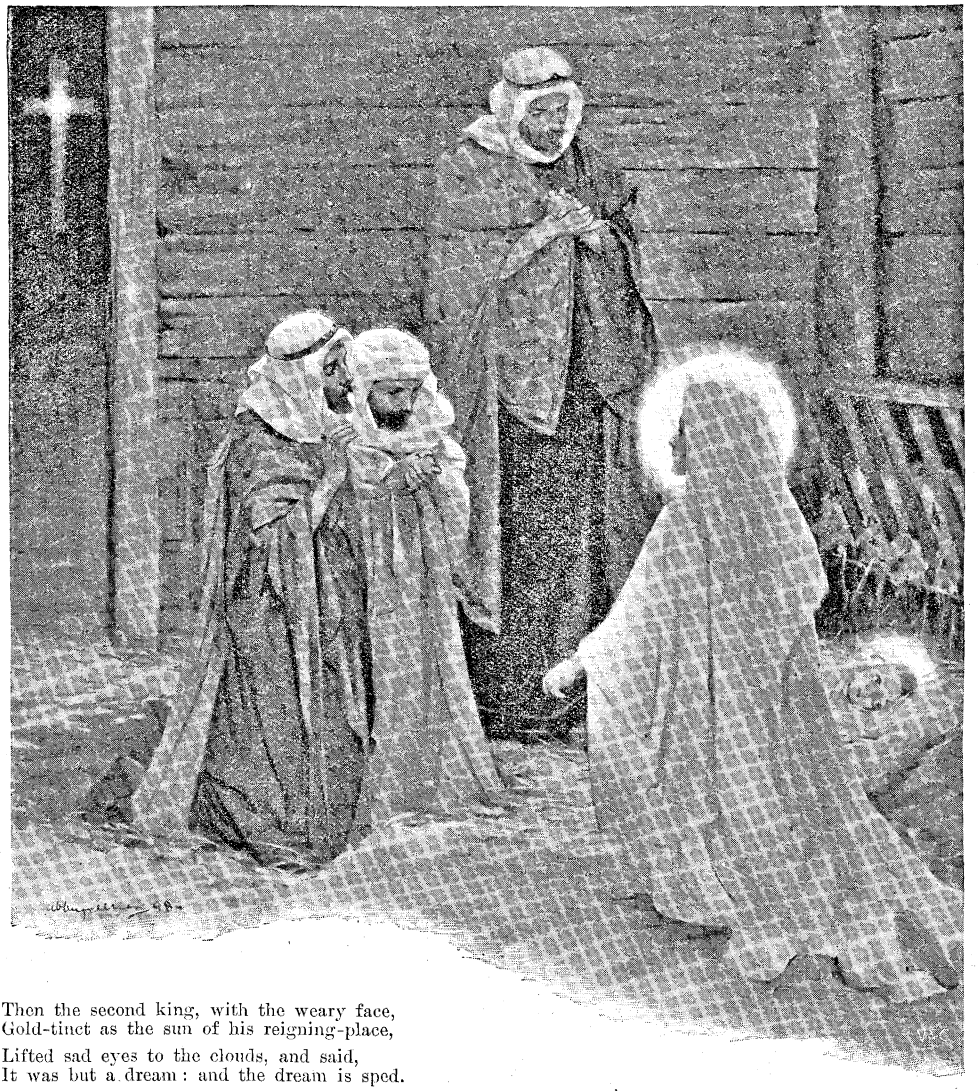

Then the second king, with the weary face,
Gold-tinct as the sun of his reigning-place,
Lifted sad eyes to the clouds, and said,
"It was but a dream: and the dream is sped.

"We dreamed of a star that rose new and fair,
"But it sets in the night of the old despair.

"Yet night is faithful, though stars betray:
"It will lead to my kingdom far away!"

Then spake the king who had fared alone
From the far-off kingdom, the white-hung throne.

"Oh, brothers, brothers, so very far
"Ye have followed the light of our radiant star;

"And because for awhile ye see it not
"Shall its faithful shining be all forgot?

"On the spirit's pathway the light still lies,
"Though the star be hid from our longing eyes.

"To-morrow our star will be bright once more,
"The little pin-hole in Heaven's floor—

"The angels pricked it, to let it bring
"Our feet to the throne of the new-born King!"

And the first king heard, and the second heard,
And their hearts grew humble before the third.

They laid them down beside bale and beast,
And their sleeping eyes saw light in the East.

For the angels fanned them with radiant wings
And the waft of visions of unseen things.

* * * * *

When the next gold day waned, trembling and white,
The star was born of the waxing night,

And the three kings came where the Great King lay,
A little Baby among the hay.

The ox and the ass were standing near,
And Mary Mother beside her Dear.

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Then low in the litter the kings bowed down,
They gave Him gold for a kingly crown:

And frankincense for a great God's breath:
And myrrh to sweeten the day of death.

The Maiden Mother she stood and smiled,
And she took from the manger her little Child.

On the dark king's heart she laid His hand,
And anger died at that dear command:

She laid His hand on the yellow king's head,
And despair itself was comforted:

But when the pale king knelt in the stall
She heard on the straw his tears down fall

She stooped where he knelt beside her feet,
And laid on his bosom the Baby sweet.

And the king in the holy stable place
Felt the little lips through the tears on his face.

* * * * *

Christ, lay Thy hand on the angry king
Who reigns in my breast to my undoing,

And lay Thy hand on the king who lays
The spell of sadness on all my days:

And give the white king, my soul, Thy soul,
Of these other kings the high control,

That soul and spirit and sense may meet
In adoration before Thy feet!

* * * * *

Now glory to God the Father most high,
And the Star, the Spirit he leads us by,

And to God's dear Son, the Babe, who was born
And laid in the manger on Christmas morn!

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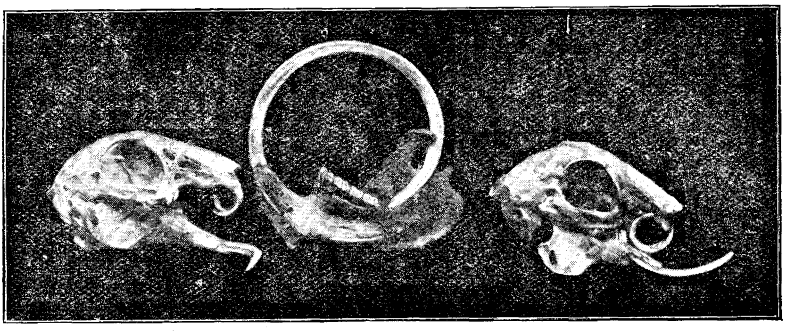
SOME ANIMAL ODDITIES.

By Gambier Bolton, F.Z.S.

Illustrated by the Author.

THE so-called human "freaks," although doubtless of interest to most scientists, and to many non-scientific persons as well, are generally more or less painful to look upon; and possibly, but for their monetary value to the peripatetic showman, they would be kept strictly in the background, instead of being shown to the public at fairs and exhibitions, where they are the cynosure of all eyes and the special delight of the open-mouthed rustics, who gaze on them in wonder, whilst passing more or less coarse jokes at the expense of these unhappy mortals.

But although, even as human beings, they would naturally come under our title, they will be passed over on this occasion, and the article will be confined to some oddities of make, shape, colour, etc., of the badly-named "lower" orders of creation; for Nature, as if to prove that she works by no fixed rule, produces not only human, but beast and bird oddities as well, many of these being such sufferers at her hands that one cannot help defining her cruelties as perfectly terrible in their machinations for the more effective working out of her great scheme, the survival of the fittest, her one inexorable law, which carries with it, amongst the smaller members of the beasts and birds more especially, miseries untold and tortures pitiful in their long drawn out periods of agony.



INCISOR TEETH (ABNORMAL) OF RODENTS.
From the copyright photo by Gambier Bolton.

"She spreads the charm of her constant renovations over strata of the dead and the dying, her purest and freshest loveliness has its roots in bygone wastefulness and decay. There is no loving-kindness about Nature, because all she cares for is the survival of the fittest; the individual is as nothing, or at most a single link in an endless chain. Her weakly nestlings fall from tree and cliff to perish, but unconcerned she beholds the death of them; her weasel sucks the grey bird's egg, yet no hand is raised against the thief, no voice comforts the screaming agony of the mother. With the van of her legions she passes, and the suffering stragglers cry in vain, for her concerns are not with them. She does no right, she works no evil; she is not cruel, neither shall we call her kind; human standards of conduct, human conceits in ethics, may not be applied to her, for she moves mysterious and outside them; she answers to no tribunal of her children."

Take, for instance, the rodent family, of which there are more than 900 distinct species known to scientists, and which consists of comparatively harmless little animals like the hares, squirrels, beavers, and mice, who live by gnawing, from which they derive their name (*rodo*—to gnaw). Their incisor or cutting teeth grow very rapidly from the roots, and just as fast as they wear away at the tips by gnawing wood and other hard substances. And this often causes some unhappy member of this vast family to be doomed to a death perfectly appalling in its exquisite cruelty, for by looking at the photograph we see what abnormal shapes these long incisors will often take, even when all the teeth are still in the head; but it is far worse when they happen to lose an upper incisor tooth from disease or accident, for the lower one,

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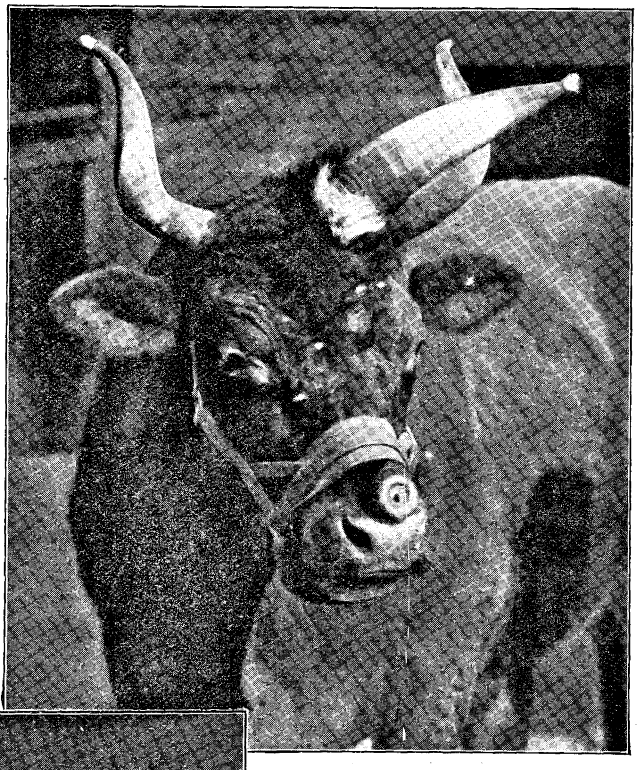
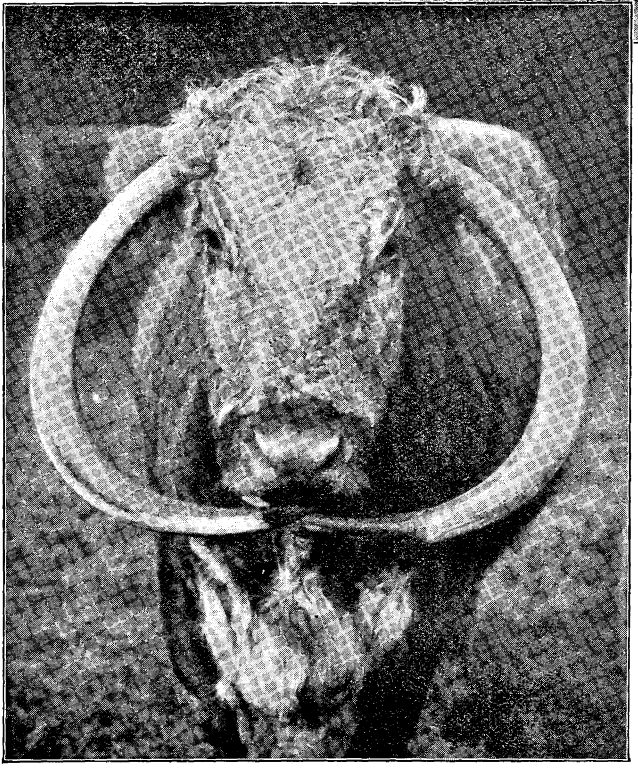
finding nothing to work upon as the animal feeds, and meeting with no opposition, continues to grow and increase in length enormously, until it curves completely round the upper jaw, and slowly each day presses down upon it tighter and tighter, until at last the wretched creature, though probably surrounded by good food in abundance, can no longer open its mouth, and after long days of torture, with food and water both denied to it, death at last puts an end to its sufferings, the upper jaw being held in an iron grip from which there is no possibility of release.

Instances are on record, too, where the end has been even worse than this, for the lower incisor tooth, as shown in the photograph of the beaver's jaw, has curved so far backwards that it has penetrated the face or skull, and has been found even



OX WITH THREE HORNS, EYES AND NOSTRILS.
From the copyright photo by Gambier Bolton.



LONG-HORNED COW.
From the copyright photo by Gambier Bolton.

between the ears, where, pressing slowly and steadily, after long weeks of torture, it has entered the head itself, and not until it has touched the brain has welcome death released the poor sufferer from its torture.

But the rodents are by no means the only sufferers, for even the larger mammals are often to be found in this category as well. The cow whose photograph we give fortunately lived in a state of domestication, for, if not, she might have been doomed to a miserable death by slow starvation, although surrounded by green pastures on every side of her.

The long-horns, of which this is a specimen, were, until the creation of the modern shorthorn, extremely common in Great Britain; but their length of horn has proved to be their ruin, for they required too much room in

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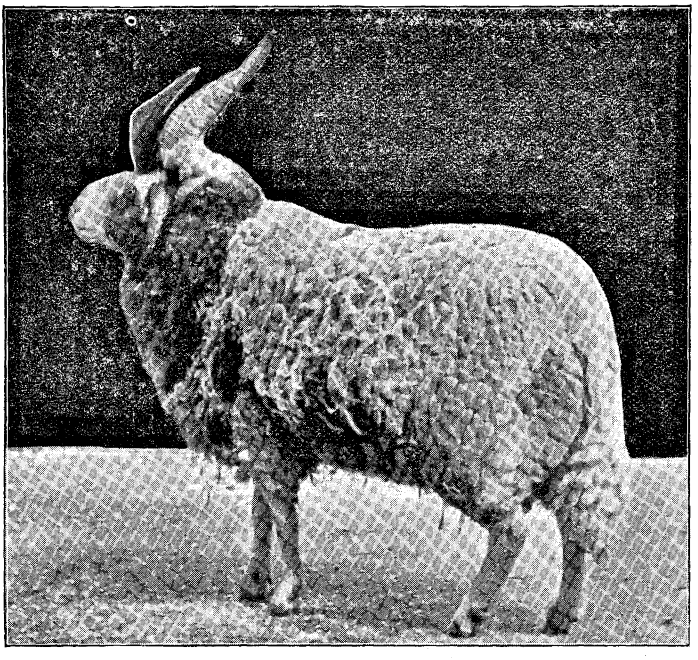
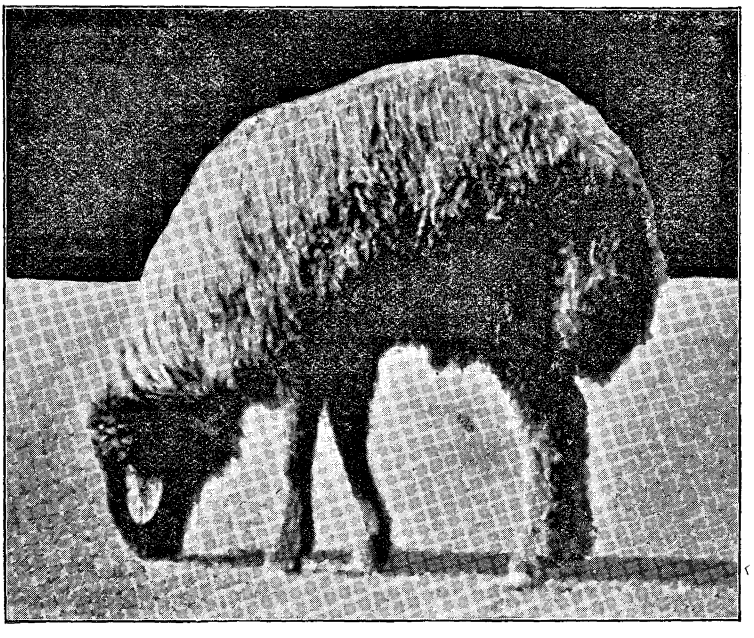


FOUR-HORNED SHEEP.
From the copyright photo by Gambier Bolton.

their sheds, the extraordinary growth of horn was thought to interfere with their milking and fattening qualities, and so the long-horned cattle were driven out by the short-horns, and before long now they will have become extinct.

The horns should grow straight out from their heads, and end with a slight curve upwards; but in the case of this cow, and it is by no means uncommon, the horns have grown downwards and then inwards, and, joining tightly underneath the lower jaw, might have caused a hideous death by slow starvation if she had been in a wild state, where it was impossible by an operation on the tips of the horns to save her life.

The three-horned ox can only be looked upon as a "freak," and in nowise a sufferer at Nature's hands, for he apparently enjoys his life to the full, has an excellent appetite, and is in first-class condition. To see him walking about at a little distance one would say that he made no pretensions to differ from the thousands of brown and white cattle which one may see feeding in British pastures; yet, on a closer investigation, we see that he not only possesses a third horn, but three nostrils and three eyes as well, the sight of the third eye having now been lost, it is supposed, through pressure from the extra horn on the optic nerves of the centre eye. It is, possibly, a case where twin calves were intended to have been born, and the third horn, nostril, and eye may really belong to a brother or sister, who, for some strange reason, never developed any further than this, at least externally. Possibly, too, this very "accident" may have occurred to one of the antelopes, such as the gemsbok



FAT-TAILED SHEEP.
From the copyright photo by Gambier Bolton.

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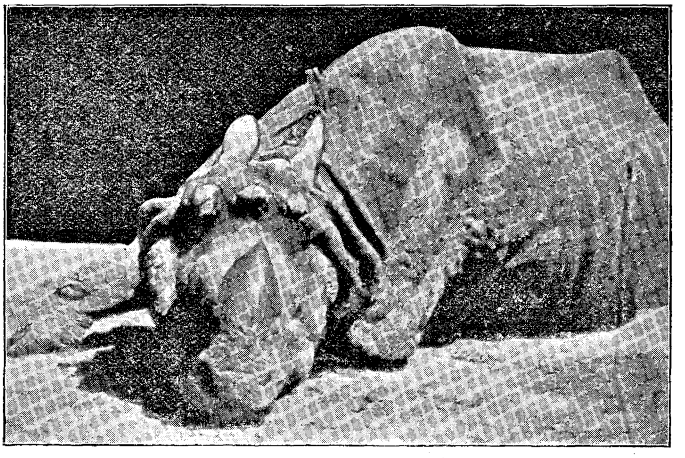
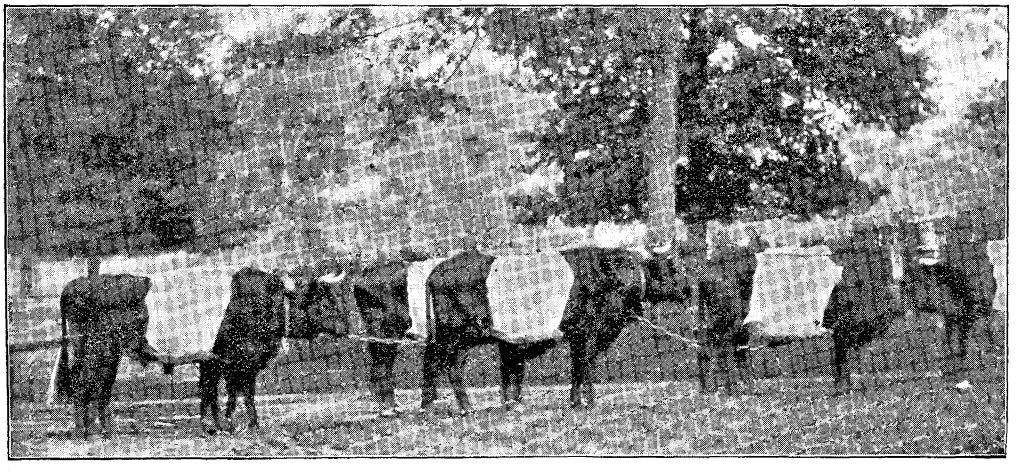
or beisa, at a date far back in African history, for they are closely allied to the cattle, especially in the growth of the horns, which, with one exception, unlike those of the deer tribe, are not shed and renewed annually, but growing from the base they wear away at the tips, and when once lost are not renewed again; and a person seeing an antelope with the long straight horn projecting from the centre of the forehead, whilst noticing that the body and tail were not altogether unlike those of a small horse, might well have been tempted to evolve in his mind the animal unknown to science, but so useful in heraldry, and named the unicorn.



A FORTY-YEAR OLD RHINOCEROS (ANTWERP).
From the copyright photo by Gambier Bolton.

Sheep with two pairs of horns to each ram are by no means common, the one whose portrait we give being an exceptionally fine specimen kept at the Clifton Zoological Gardens, the pair of horns curving downwards and burying their tips in the wool round the neck being quite as good as the pair which taper gracefully upwards from the head. Instances are on record where rams have been known with even eight horns each, but, like Livingstone's six-tusked elephant, these are not to be met with every day of one's life. The *flat*-tailed sheep shows its peculiarity in the great length and weight of its tail, the one to be seen in the Calcutta Zoological Gardens carrying a tail about half its full size. In some parts of the East they grow to an enormous length and weigh over 50 lbs. each, their owners, to prevent the strain on the sheep as they drag their huge tails along the ground, actually making little sledges on which the tail rests, the sledge being fastened to the animal's body, thus enabling it to get about with a certain degree of comfort to itself. The *fat*-tailed sheep, on the other hand, has an extremely short tail, a mere stump only, but it makes up for this by having two large bumps or excrescences of fat hanging down, one from each of its haunches. The lambs of this breed are killed when they are very young, and their black, tightly curling wool constitutes the astrachan of



DUTCH SHEETED OXEN.
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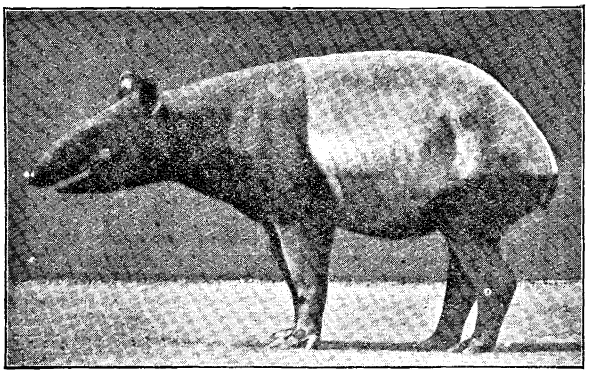
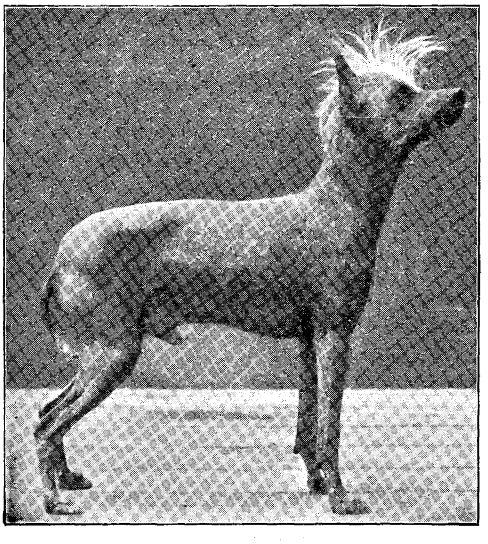


MALAYAN TAPIR.
From the copyright photo by Gambier Bolton.

commerce. These huge flat tails and fat protuberances are thought to serve as a store of nourishment, just as we see in the case of the humps of the camel; for in times of scarcity of food and water the tails and bumps gradually grow smaller, whilst the sheep itself appears to get but very little thinner in body.

The first thing that is generally noticed about the forty-year-old rhinoceros at the Antwerp Zoological Gardens is the extraordinary roughness of its skin, which stands out on many portions of the body like lumps of burnt clay; but on looking at the head and neck we see something even more remarkable, for just in front of the ears are three excrescences which resemble the short antlers of the deer when they first commence to grow, after the annual shedding of the old ones, whilst on the neck are several spikes of varying length, each growing quite straight upwards and terminating in two which stand up nearly six inches from the neck. Our large rhinoceros, "Jim," which has lived about thirty years in Regent's Park, strange to say, already shows signs of similar excrescences on his neck, so that it is possible that in time we may be the proud possessors of an animal oddity quite as remarkable as the one illustrated.

The variations in colour and markings are by no means the least remarkable things in animal life, and even amongst the uniformly black and white Dutch cattle it is extremely rare to find eight oxen so wonderfully marked as these "sheeted" steers which at one time belonged to Mr. Beresford-Hope and worked at ploughing and hay-carrying on his farm in Sussex. So evenly were they marked that, to any person not used to seeing them, it would have been an absolute impossibility to distinguish one from the other, or to have sorted them out into their proper positions in the team; and it was rumoured that over one thousand guineas had been refused for these "sheeted" oxen, unique in this country, and



THE HAIRLESS DOG.
From the copyright photo by Gambier Bolton.

STYX.
From the copyright photo by Gambier Bolton.

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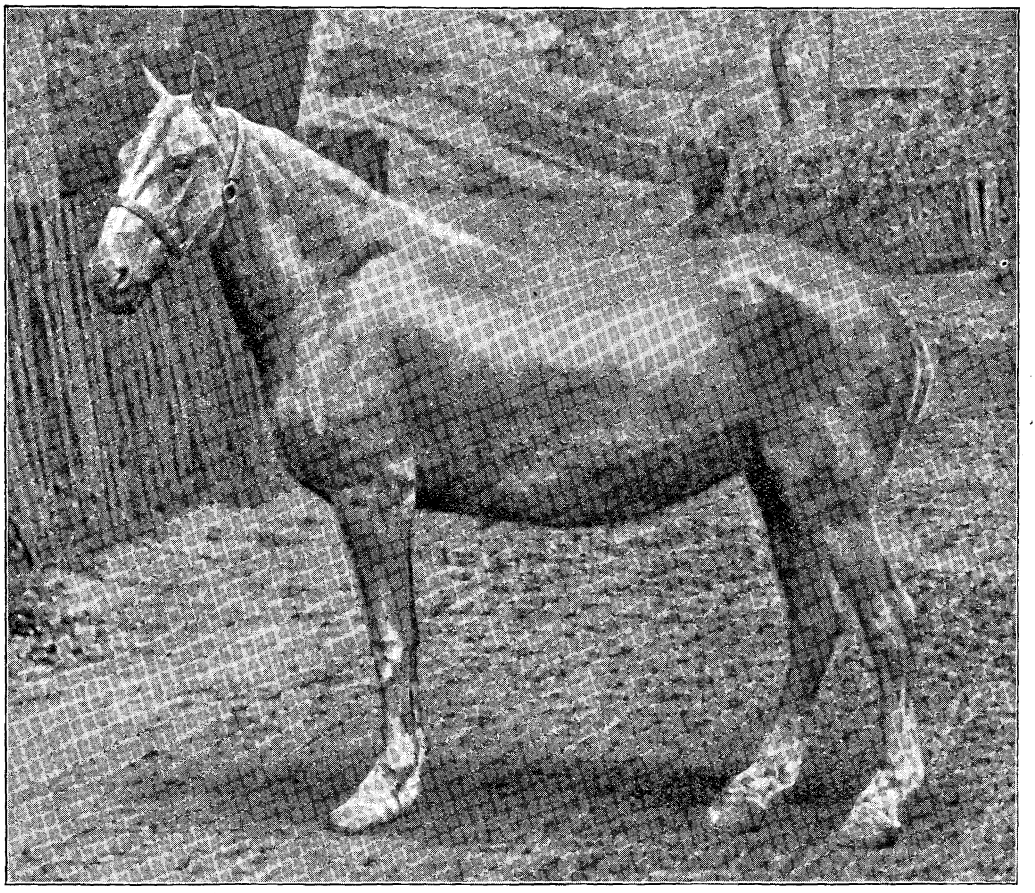
very difficult ever to match again even in Holland.

And amongst wild animals we find exactly this same peculiarity of marking in the tapirs, of which there are four species in Central and South America, all being a uniform dark brown or blackish colour, whilst the solitary Old World specimen is found in the Malayan region and is "sheeted" in exactly the same way as the Dutch cattle, making it an especially easy object to see when on land, and even when, like the hippopotamus, it walks along the bottom of the rivers, instead of swimming at the top.

The cross-bred lion and tiger is, for some strange reason, extremely rare, the best-known specimens in this country being the one born in a menagerie near Windsor many years ago, one in the Hon. Walter Rothschild's magnificent museum at Tring, born in Germany, and (a supposed) one at present in Herr Hargenbeck's collection of living animals at Earl's Court. Mr. Pocock, of the Natural History Museum, in calling attention to this hybrid, says that its colour is tawny like that of the lion, rather than reddish-yellow like that of the tiger, and that the stripes, although faint, are quite visible, especially on the tail. He has noticed, too, that although decidedly lion-like in most respects, this hybrid has black corners to its mouth, and these, with the hairs round them, are invariably black in the tiger, whilst they are always white in the lion.



THE HAIRLESS MARE.

From the copyright photo by Gambier Bolton.

The Tring specimen that is shown is decidedly tiger-like in every respect, as it is reddish-yellow in colour, the stripes being plainly visible, whilst the corners of the mouth are jet black, the Windsor hybrid being very similar, so that Hargenbeck's

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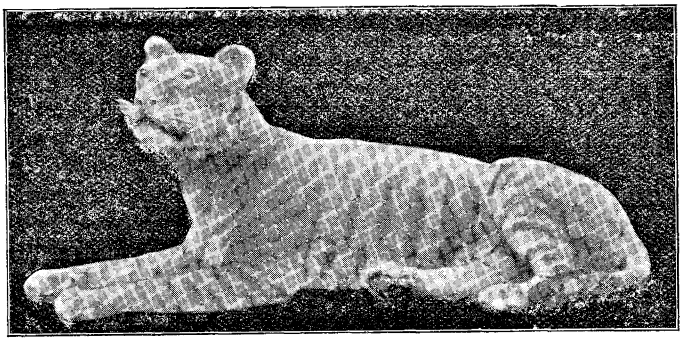
living specimen may be said to be much the most uncommon type of the three. There is no reason why they should not be more common, as lion and tiger cubs grow up together constantly in our menageries and zoos, and both are true cats in every sense of the word. And yet there appears to be a "something" between the two breeds, as the writer witnessed one day in our collection at Regent's Park, where a young lion, lioness, and a tiger, all about the same age and height, at one time lived together. They were out in the enclosure at the back of the Carnivora House, when quite suddenly the lioness fell down in a fainting fit. Both lion and tiger at once stepped towards her, but although on the very best of terms at all other times, the lion would not permit the tiger to approach to within a dozen yards of the unconscious lioness, but stood over her with glaring eyes, white teeth gleaming, ears laid back, and growling in a way that clearly meant mischief to any intruder. An old Irishman, standing by, summed up the matter rather neatly by remarking, "Ah! it's 'Hands off!' there; that's the same sort of difference as between the white man and the nigger."



LION AND TIGER HYBRID.
From the copyright photo by Gambier Bolton.

Hairy and hairless animals make up another branch of oddities. Look at the corded poodle, with his dense masses of hair falling over his eyes, and sooner or later spoiling his sight if it is not tied back in a top-knot, the cords hanging down in such length as to interfere with his progress, stopping anything like a run by bringing the wretched dog quickly on to his head, as he trips up over his own coat-tails, which often sweep the ground, and have earned for these dogs the title "animated door-mats." Watch them walking down a street, and see the way in which they collect dead leaves, odd pieces of paper, orange peel and refuse of all kinds, and in muddy weather pick up the mud they come in contact with, and you will not wonder that a London doctor who owned a very celebrated prize-winning poodle recently, always sent him out in wet weather in a pair of blue knicker-bockers, which were pulled over the front legs (his hind ones being clipped in the orthodox fashion) and buttoned up neatly over his back. Ludicrous as the idea may seem, it was clearly a case of "rational" costume in his case, for even on the muddiest day, when he returned to his home, it was merely necessary to take off his knickerbockers, wipe his feet, and send him into the drawing-room as neat as before he started.

And what a contrast the wretched, shivering little hairless dog presents to the one with too much hair. They are found in many different parts of the world, especially in Central Africa, China, and Central and South America, and are absolutely naked except for a tuft on the forehead, some few hairs round the feet and ankles, and a suspicion of hair at the end of the tail, whilst in colour they are quite as remarkable, for many of them (like the one photographed) are bright pink, with spots of a reddish-brown all over them, giving them the appearance of piglets of a very tender age. Some of them are a dull slate colour, like the hairless mare. A well shaped and strongly built animal, she would no doubt have been worth a considerable sum if she had not possessed this peculiarity with which she was born, but as she is believed to be quite unique in her nakedness, no other hairless mare being known, she is probably priceless as an animal freak, her owners, Messrs. Barnum and Bailey, being extremely proud of her.

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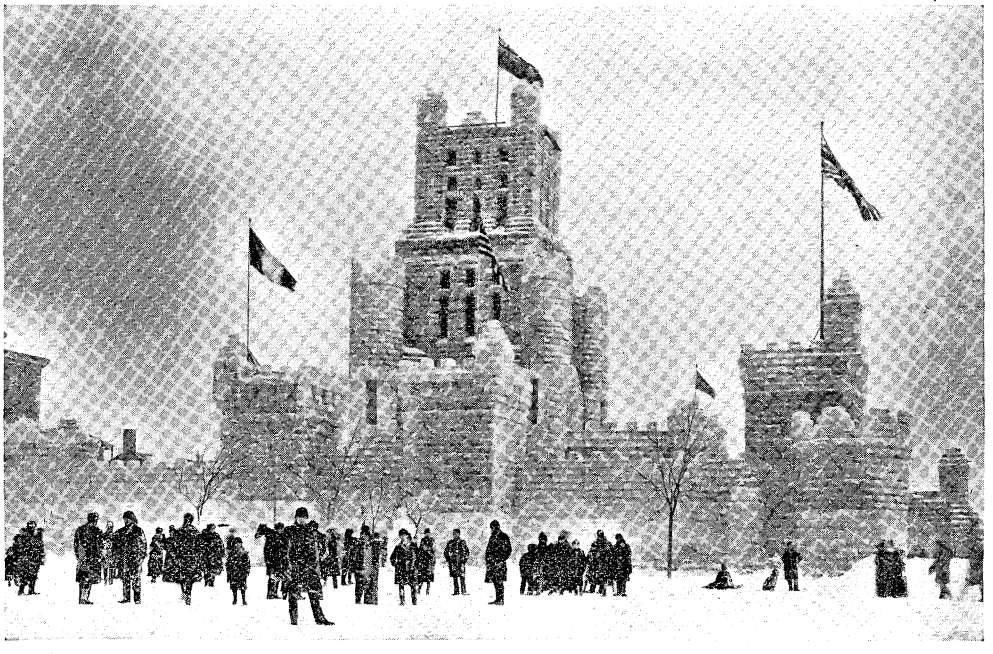
THE ICE PALACES OF CANADA.

By George Mowbray.

WHEN Kipling wrote his beautiful poem on Canada, designating her affectionately as "Our Lady of the Snows," our loyal and trusted Canadians waxed very indignant. His English readers to this day fail to understand why such offence was taken at the allusion, and anyone whose good fortune it has been to pay a visit to Canada in winter is equally at a loss to account for it. For lovely as the short Canadian summer is, it is in the frosty winter months that Canada really lives its life, when gaiety abounds on every side, and, braced up by a dry, crisp atmosphere which seems to give new life and strength to those who inhale it, people find exhilarating recreations out of doors that we in this warmer, murky climate can only envy.

It is in winter Canada assumes her busiest aspect, and winter when all the sports which are typical of the country and the people take place. Tobogganing, sleighing, shoeshoving and ski-lobing all begin their reign as soon as the first snows fall; and when frost leaves a coating of ice upon the rivers, everybody, great and small, rich and poor, busy and idle, hastens out in one great community which has one thing in common —its love of the sport—to taste the first joys which winter brings. Canadians notwithstanding, it is as "Our Lady of the Snows" —and a pleasant, robust, healthy dame it is —that one's brightest memories of Canada are fixed.

Where else in the world do you find such



THE MONTREAL ICE PALACE BY DAY.
Photo by A. T. Lane, Montreal.

palaces as the Canadians build, their masonry of solid ice glittering at every point with every ray of sunshine that falls upon them? They can claim no great antiquity, for they are fabrics of a day, creatures of the winter frosts which pass away when spring comes round again. Yet they have a solidity which no wall of stone can surpass, for they become one solid block of ice, vast and substantial, rising skywards in towers and turrets and battlements which might imprison an army. And the winter carnival at Ottawa and

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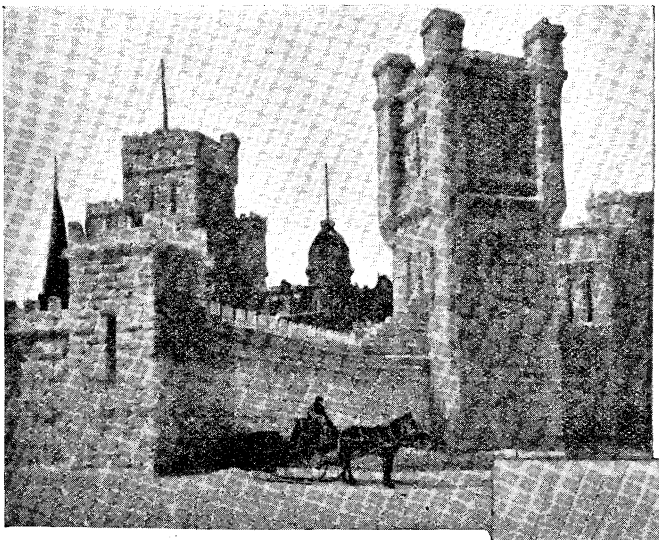
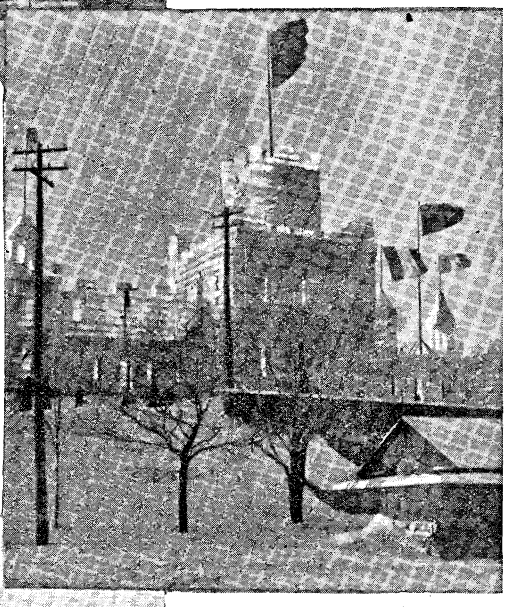


EXTERIOR OF AN ICE PALACE.

Montreal is a spectacle unrivalled in its novelty and splendour by anything that other countries can give.

The ice palace is a feature of winter in the Canadian capital. Lit up within on a dark night, it is a brilliant object for miles round, the light shining through the ice in a subdued glow as if every block contained its separate incandescent lamp. It becomes a centre of entertainment while the frost lasts, and invariably an object of admiration and amazement to those who witness such a structure for the first time. The building conveys an impression of fairy-like lightness, which its semi-transparency deepens, but those who know how great the weight of ice is will readily realise that tons upon tons of ice blocks have had to be moved into position before the palace stands erect and complete.

When building, the ice palace is not less interesting than in its finished state. The first thing done is to get satisfactory blocks of ice, which are drawn from the rivers.

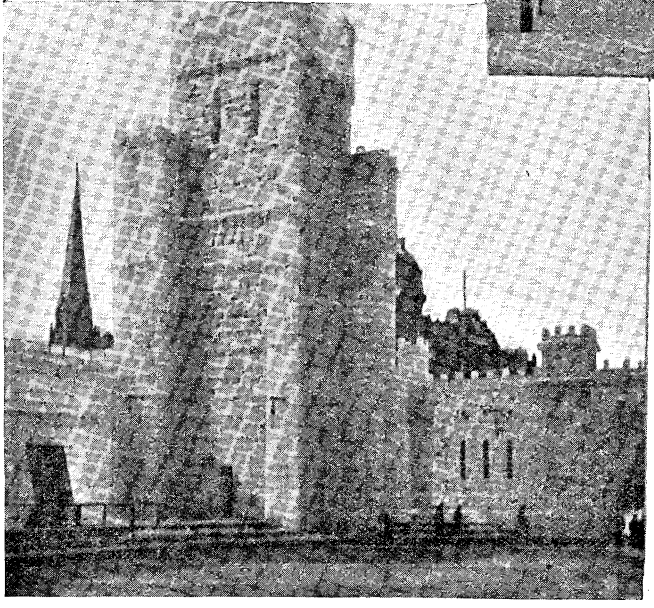


A FORT OF ICE, OTTAWA.

A watch is kept until the ice is of sufficient thickness, when it is cut with saws into long rectangular blocks, which are taken away in sledges to the scene of operations. Many thousands of these are needed, and this task affords work for numbers of people who are thrown out of employment by the winter.

Usually the site chosen for the ice palace is an open space in a public park, or some equally accessible spot, which is freely given for the purpose.

The palace is built under the superintendence of an



INSIDE THE COURT OF AN ICE PALACE.

Photographs by Underwood & Underwood.

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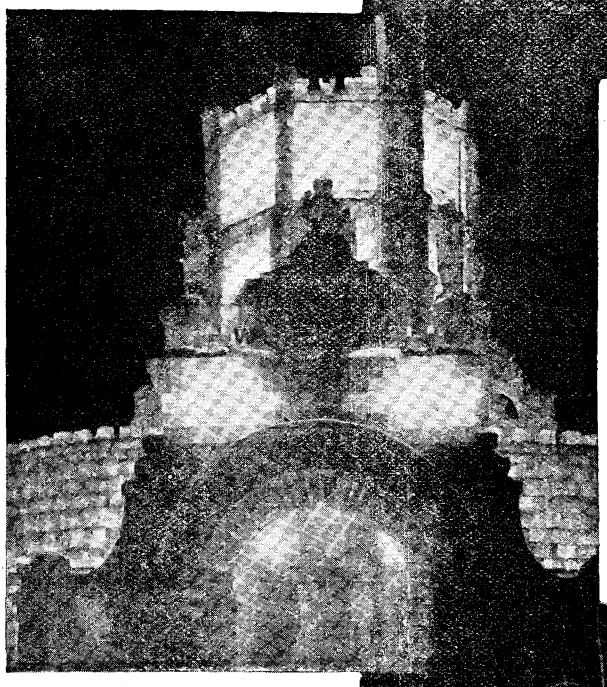
architect, who is responsible for its stability, for there might be a terrible disaster should a tower fall. Block after block of translucent ice is swung up and placed in position by cranes, one above another, and so the walls grow until the whole design is carried out. It is commonly a replica of one of the old baronial castles of England, with, of course, such modifications as the material used necessitates.

Arches are formed by ice-

ON THE LAST NIGHT OF THE CARNIVAL—

even statues have been fashioned out of ice, many of them clever pieces of work.

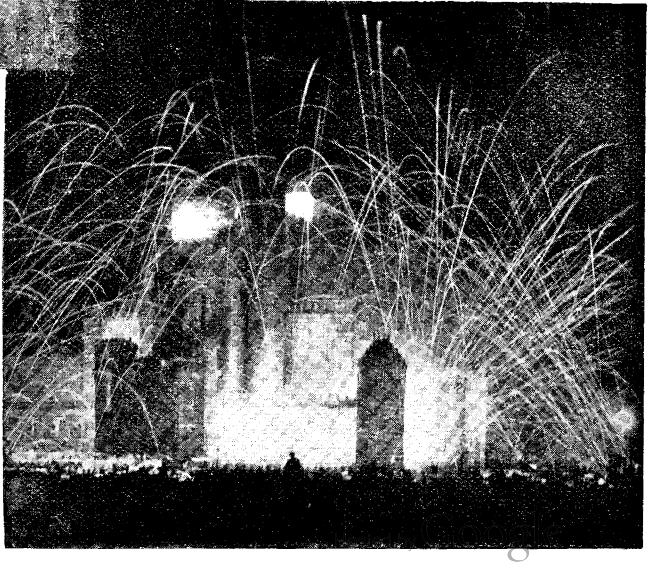
It is a well-known property of ice that if slabs are placed one upon another they freeze together into one solid mass. In this way the thousands of separate slabs which go to the construction of an ice palace freeze up into one continuous whole, so that as long as the walls are vertical safety is assured. When first removed from the rivers the ice is of a delicate green tint, but the colour soon afterwards fades.



THE PALACES ARE ILLUMINATED WITH ELECTRIC LIGHTS—

blocks over the entrances, as readily and almost as strongly as if made of stone. The palace contains no cosy chambers, nor is it burdened with a roof.

A favourite plan is to build an outer wall, enclosing a large open courtyard, with towers at the angles, and a huge tower, or keep, towards the centre. This was the plan adopted in the Montreal ice palace, pictures of which, as seen by day and by night, are here shown. Some architectural ornament in broad style is carved out without difficulty in ice, and



AND ENVELOPED IN SHOWERS OF FIREWORKS.

Photographs by Underwood & Underwood.

Once completed, the ice palace is a thing of delight. It stands erect in the bright winter sunshine glittering like a mass of crystal, and as the sun sinks towards the horizon is lit up in many-coloured hues by its last slanting rays. Flags of all nations floating from towers and battlements increase its rich effect. But it is when illuminated at night that the ice palace is seen at its best.

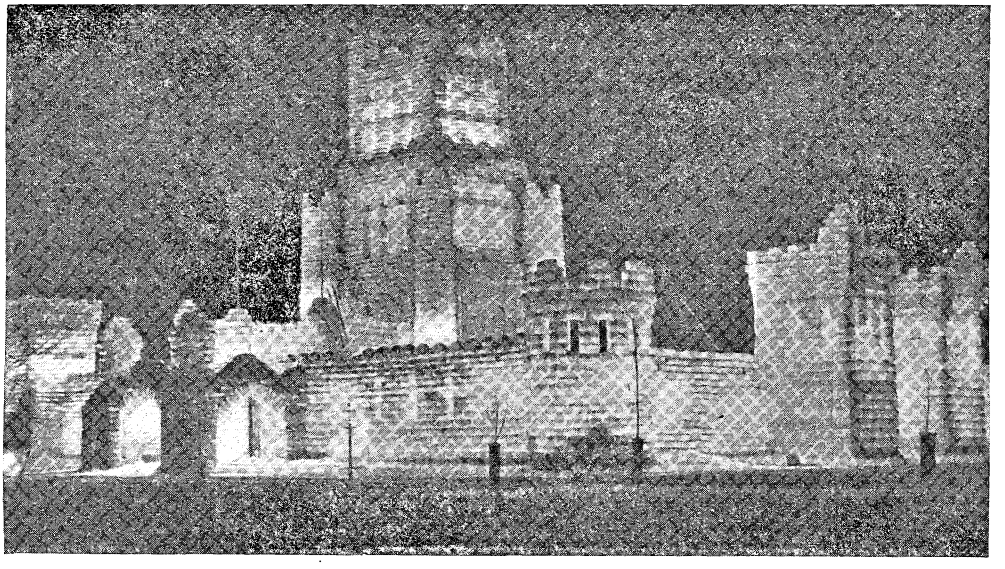
Strong electric arc lamps are suspended throughout the structure, to the number of forty or more, which throw out a subdued light all round, and sometimes on carnival nights calcium lights are added to render beautiful colour effects, so that the whole building glows in the frosted air like a veritable fairy palace.

A great ceremonial is arranged for the final night of the carnival, which fittingly concludes the festivities of which the ice palace has been the centre during the winter. All the place is ablaze with light, tones of red and white and blue alternating, and thousands of persons flock to the scene, where all is brightness and animation.

The grand climax is the storming of the palace. A number of men arrayed in the garb of soldiers are detailed off to garrison the palace and defend it against the attackers. These may be another body arrayed as soldiers.

Mock Indians are at times favoured for the assault, as the costume is picturesque and not difficult to simulate with the aid of a few feathers and daubs of red paint. Rockets blaze off in all directions, and the air is thick with the explosion of fireworks and the shouts and war-whoops of the attackers and defenders. As a matter of course the castle eventually yields, the Indians take possession, and there is a grand *finale* of fireworks and coloured fires, of which the ice palace forms a magnificent centre.

This is the memory which remains indelible long after the palace has melted away before the warm sunshine of the coming spring. We cannot have such a festival in England, where a hard frost lasting a fortnight is an event coming at intervals of years. These wonderful ice structures are peculiar to "Our Lady of the Snows," and they stand out typical of the hardy spirit of Canadians, who find in a winter the length of which might depress the spirits of other races the occasion for their chief sports and amusements.



THE MONTREAL PALACE ILLUMINATED WITH FORTY-FIVE ELECTRIC ARC LAMPS.
Photo by A. T. Lane, Montreal.

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Her First Ball.

FROM A DRAWING BY ST. CLAIR SIMMONS.

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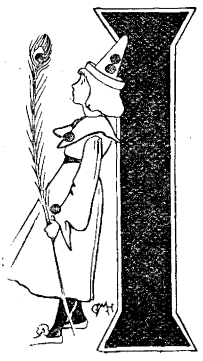
STALKY & CO.

By Rudyard Kipling.*

Illustrated by L. Raven Hill.

No. II.—AN UNSAVOURY INTERLUDE.



IT was a maiden aunt of Stalky who sent him both books, with the inscription, "To dearest Artie, on his sixteenth birthday"; it was McTurk who ordered their hypothecation; and it was Beetle, returned from Bideford, who flung them on to the window-sill of Number Five study with news that Bastable would advance but ninepence on the two, "Eric; or, Little by Little," being almost as great a drug as "St. Winifred's." "An' I don't think much of your aunt. We're nearly out of cartridges, too—Artie, dear."

Whereupon Stalky rose up to grapple with him, but McTurk sat on Stalky's head, calling him a "pure-minded boy" till peace was declared. As they were grievously in arrears with a Latin prose, as it was a blazing July afternoon, and as they ought to have been at a house cricket-match, they began to renew their acquaintance, intimate and unholy, with the volumes.

"Here we are!" said McTurk. "'Corporal punishment produced on Eric the worst effects. He burned, *not* with remorse or regret'—make a note o' that, Beetle—'but with shame and violent indignation. He glared'—oh, naughty Eric! Let's get to where he goes in for drink."

"Hold on half a sec. Here's another sample. 'The sixth,' he says, 'is the palladium of all public schools.' But this lot"—Stalky rapped the book—"can't prevent fellows drinkin' and stealin', an' lettin' fags out of window at night, an'—an' doin' what they please. Golly, what we've missed—not goin' to St. Winifred's! . . ."

"I'm sorry to see any boys of my house taking so little interest in their matches."

Mr. Prout could move very silently if he pleased, though that is no merit in a boy's eyes. He had flung open the study door without knocking—another sin—and looked at them suspiciously. "Very sorry indeed, I am, to see you frowsting in your studies."

"We've been out ever since dinner, sir," said McTurk wearily. One house-match is just like another, and the "ploy" of that week happened to be rabbit-shooting with saloon-pistols.

"I can't see a ball when it's coming, sir," said Beetle. "I've had my gig-lamps smashed at little-side cricket till I got excused. I wasn't any good even as a fag, then, sir."

"Tuck is probably your form. Tuck and brewing. Why can't you three take any interest in the honour of your house?"

They had heard that phrase till they were wearied. The "honour of the house" was Prout's weak point, and they knew well how to flick him on the raw.

"If you order us to go down, sir, of course we'll go," said Stalky, with maddening politeness. But Prout knew better than that. He had tried the experiment once at a big match, when the three, self-isolated, stood to attention

"McTurk."

* Copyright, 1898, in the United States of America, by Rudyard Kipling.

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for half an hour in full view of all the visitors, to whom fags, subsidised for that end, pointed them out as victims of Prout's tyranny. And Prout was a sensitive man.

In the infinitely petty confederacies of the common-room, King and Macrea, fellow house-masters, had borne it in upon him that by games, and games alone, was salvation wrought. Boys neglected were boys lost. They must be disciplined. Left to himself, Prout would have made a sympathetic house-master; but he was never so left, and with the acumen of youth the boys knew to whom they were indebted for his zeal.

"Must we go down, sir?" said McTurk.

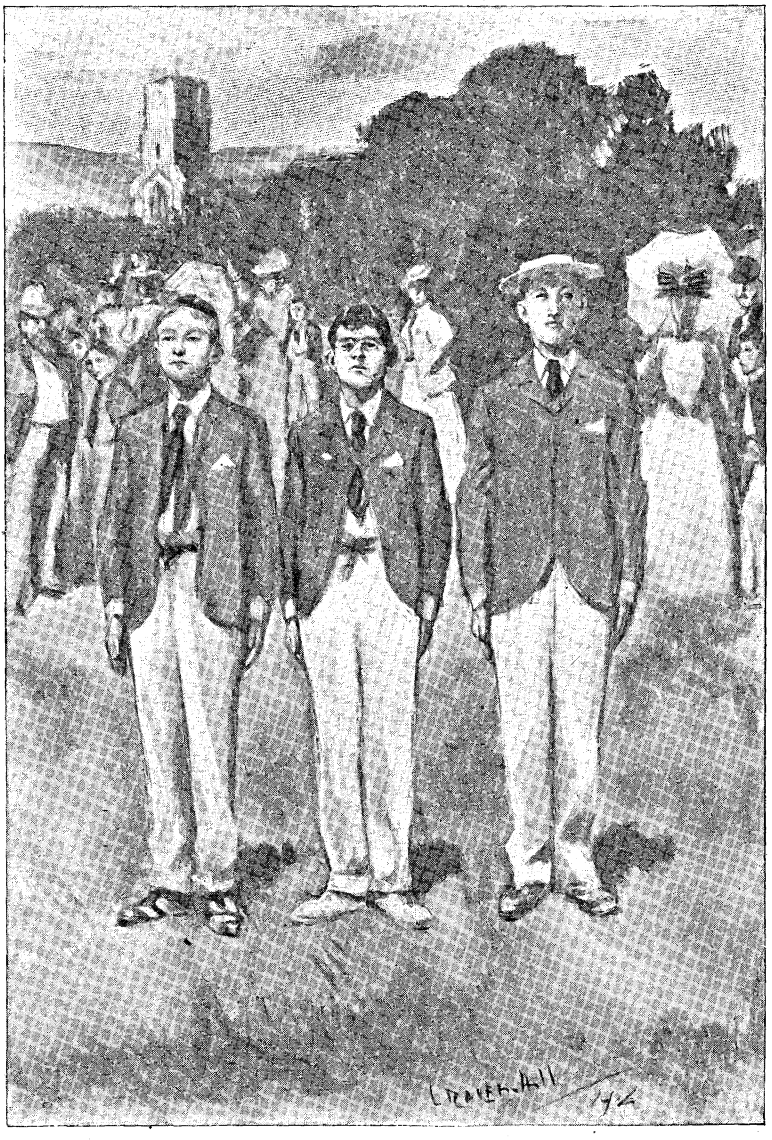
"I don't want to order you to do what a right-thinking boy should do gladly. I'm sorry." And slowly he lurched out with some hazy impression that he had sown good seed on poor ground.

"What does he suppose is the good of that?" said Beetle.

"Oh, he's cracked. King jaws him in common-room about not keepin' us up to the mark, and Macrea burbles about 'dithcipline,' an' old Heffy sits between 'em sweatin' big drops. I heard Oke (the common-room butler) talking to Richards (Prout's house-servant) about it down in the basement the other day when I went down to bag some bread," said Stalky.

"What did Oke say?" demanded McTurk, throwing "Eric" into a corner.

"Oh, he said, 'They make more nise nor a nest full o' jackdaws, an' half of it like we'd no ears to our heads that waited on 'em. They talks over old Prout—what he've done an' left undone about his boys. An' how their boys be fine boys, an' his'n be dom bad.' Well, Oke talked like that, you know,



"The three, self-isolated, stood to attention."

and Richards got awf'ly wrathy. He's got a down on King for something or other. Wonder why?"

"Why, King talks about Prout in form-room—makes allusions, an' all that—only half the chaps are such asses they can't see

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what he's drivin' at. And d'you remember what he said about the 'Casual House' last Tuesday? He meant us. They say he says perfectly beastly things to his own house, making fun of Prout's."

"Well, we didn't come here to mix up in their rows," said McTurk wrathfully. "Who'll bathe after call-over? King's takin' it in the cricket-field. Come on." Turkey seized his hat and led the way.

They reached the sun-blistered pavilion over against the grey Pebble Ridge just before roll-call, and, asking no questions, gathered from King's voice and manner that his house was on the road to victory.

"Ah, ha!" said he, turning to show the light of his countenance. "Here we have the ornaments of the Casual House at last. You consider cricket beneath you, I believe" —the crowd sniggered—"and from what I have seen this afternoon, I fancy many others of your house hold the same view. And may I ask what you purpose to do with your noble selves till teatime?"

"'Going down to bathe, sir," said Stalky.

"And whence this sudden zeal for cleanliness? There is nothing about you that particularly suggests it. Indeed, so far as I remember—I may be at fault—but a short time ago——"

"Five years, sir," said Beetle hotly.

King scowled. "*One* of you was that thing called a water-funk. Yes, a water-funk. So now you wish to wash? It is well. Cleanliness never injured a boy or—a house. We will proceed to business," and he addressed himself to the call-over board.

"What the deuce did you say anything to him for, Beetle?" said McTurk angrily, as they strolled towards the big, open sea-baths.

"'Twasn't fair—remindin' one of bein' a water-funk. My first term, too. Heaps of chaps are—when they can't swim."

"Yes, you ass; but he saw he'd fetched you. You ought never to answer King."

"But it wasn't fair, Stalky."

"My Hat! You've been here six years, and you expect fairness. Well, you *are* a dithering idiot."

A knot of King's boys, also bound for the baths, hailed them, beseeching them to wash —for the honour of their house.

"That's what comes of King's jawin' and messin'. Those young animals wouldn't have thought of it unless he'd put it into their heads. Now they'll be funny about it for weeks," said Stalky. "Don't take any notice."

The boys came nearer, shouting an opprobrious word. At last they moved to windward, ostentatiously holding their noses.

"That's pretty," said Beetle. "They'll be sayin' our house stinks next."

When they returned from the baths, damp-headed, languid, at peace with the world, Beetle's forecast came only too true. They were met in the corridor by a fag—a common, lower-second fag—who at arm's length handed them a carefully wrapped piece of soap "with the compliments of King's house."

"Hold on," said Stalky, checking immediate attack. "Who put you up to this, Nixon? Rattray and White? (Those were two leaders in King's house.) Thank you. There's no answer."

"Oh, it's too sickening to have this kind o' rot shoved on to a chap. What's the sense of it? What's the fun of it?" said McTurk.

"It will go on to the end of the term, though." Beetle wagged his head sorrowfully. He had worn many jests threadbare on his own account."

In a few days it became an established legend of the school that Prout's house did not wash and were therefore noisome. Mr. King was pleased to smile succulently in form when one of his house drew aside from Beetle with certain gestures.

"There seems to be some disability attaching to you, my Beetle, or else why should Burton major withdraw, so to speak, the hem of his garments? I confess I am still in the dark. Will someone be good enough to enlighten me?"

Naturally he was enlightened by half the form.

"Extraordinary! Most extraordinary! However, each house has its traditions, with which I would not for the world interfere. *We* have a prejudice in favour of washing. Go on, Beetle—from 'Jugurtha tamen'—and, if you can, avoid the more flagrant forms of guessing."

Prout's house was furious because Macrea's and Hartopp's house joined King's to insult them. They called a house-meeting after dinner—an excited and angry meeting of all save the prefects, whose dignity, though they sympathised, would not allow them to attend. They read ungrammatical resolutions, and made speeches beginning, "Gentlemen, we have met on this occasion," and ending with, "It's a beastly shame," precisely as houses have done since time and schools began.

Number Five study attended, with its usual

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air of bland patronage. At last McTurk, of the lanthorn jaws, delivered himself—

"You jabber and jaw and burble, and that's about all you *can* do. What's the good of it? King's house'll only gloat because they've drawn you, and King will gloat, too. Besides, that resolution of Orrin's is chock full of bad grammar, and King'll gloat over *that*."

"I thought you an' Beetle would put it right, an'—an' we'd post it in the corridor," said the composer meekly.

"*Pas si je le connais.* I'm not goin' to meddle with the biznai," said Beetle. "It's a gloat for King's house. Turkey's quite right."

"Well, won't Stalky, then?"

But Stalky puffed out his cheeks and squinted down his nose in the style of Panurge, and all he said was, "Oh, you abject burblers!"

"You're three beastly scabs!" was the instant retort of the democracy, and they went out amid execrations.

"This is piffling," said McTurk. "Let's get our sallies, and go and shoot bunnies."

Three saloon-pistols, with a supply of bulleted breech-caps, were stored in Stalky's trunk, and this trunk was in their dormitory, and their dormitory was a three-bed attic one, opening out of a ten-bed establishment, which, in turn, communicated with the great range of dormitories that ran practically from one end of the College to the other. Macrea's house lay next to Prout's, King's next to Macrea's, and Hartopp's beyond that again. Carefully locked doors divided house from house, but each house, in its internal arrangements—the College had been originally a terrace of twelve large houses—was a replica of the next, one straight roof covering all.

They found Stalky's bed drawn out from the wall to the left of the dormer window, and the latter end of Richards protruding from a two-foot-square cupboard in the wall.

"What's all this? I've never noticed it before. What are you tryin' to do, Fatty?"

"Fillin' basins, Muster Corkran." Richards' voice was hollow and muffled. "They've been savin' me trouble. Yiss."

"'Looks like it," said McTurk. "Hi! You'll stick if you don't take care."

Richards backed puffing.

"I can't rache un. Yiss, 'tess a turncock, Muster McTurk. They've took an' runned all the watter-pipes a storey higher in the houses—runned 'em all along under the 'ang of the heaves, like. Runned 'em in last holidays. *I* can't reach the turncock."

"Let me try, then," said Stalky, diving into the aperture.

"Slip 'ee to the left, then, Muster Corkran. Slip 'ee to the left, an' feel in the dark."

To the left Stalky wriggled, and saw a long line of lead-pipe disappearing up a triangular tunnel, whose roof was the rafters and boarding of the college roof, whose floor was sharp-edged joists, and whose side was the rough studding of the lath and plaster wall under the dormer.

"'Rummy show. How far does it go?"

"Right along, Muster Corkran—right along from end to end. Her runs under the 'ang of the heaves. Have 'ee rached the stopcock yet? Mr. King got un put in to save us carryin' watter from downstairs to fill the basins. No place for a lusty man like old Richards. I'm tu thickabout to go ferretin'. Thank 'ee, Muster Corkran."

The water squirted through the tap just inside the cupboard, and having filled the basins, the grateful Richards waddled away.

The boys sat round-eyed on their beds considering the possibilities of this trove. Two floors below them they could hear the hum of the angry house, for nothing is so still as dormitories in mid-afternoon of a midsummer term.

"It has been papered over till now." McTurk examined the little door. "If we'd only known before!"

"I vote we go down and explore. No one will come up this time o' day. We needn't keep *cavé*."

They crawled in, Stalky leading, drew the door behind them, and on all fours embarked on a dark and dirty road full of plaster, odd shavings, and all the raffle builders leave in the waste room of a house. The passage was perhaps three feet wide, and, except for the struggling light round the edges of the cupboards (there was one to each dormer), almost pitchy dark.

"Here's Macrea's house," said Stalky, his eye at the crack of the third cupboard. "I can see Barnes's name on his trunk. Don't make such a row, Beetle! We can get right to the end of the Coll. Come on! . . . We're in King's house now—I can see a bit of Rattray's trunk. Golly! How these beastly boards hurt one's knees." They heard his nails scraping on plaster.

"That's the ceiling below. Look out! If we smashed that the plaster 'ud fall down in the lower dormitory," said Beetle.

"Let's," from McTurk.

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"'It's a cat, by Jove. You plug first.'"

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"An' be collared first thing? Not much. Why, I can shove my hand ever so far up between these boards."

Stalky thrust an arm to the elbow between the joists.

"No good stayin' here. I vote we go back and talk it over. It's a crummy place. 'Must say I'm grateful to King for his waterworks."

They crawled out, brushed one another clean, slid the saloon pistols down a trouser-leg, and hurried forth to a deep and solitary Devonshire lane in whose flanks a boy might sometimes slay a young rabbit. They threw themselves down under the rank elder-bushes, and began to think aloud.

"You know," said Stalky at last, sighting at a distant sparrow, "we could hide our sallies in there like anything."

"Huh!" Beetle snorted, choked and gurgled. He had been silent since they left the dormitory. "Did you ever read a book called 'The History of a House' or something? I got it out of the library the other day. A French woman wrote it—Violet somebody. But it's translated, you know; and it's very interestin'. 'Tells you how a house is built."

"Well, if you're in a sweat to find out *that*, you can go down to the new cottages they're building for the coastguard."

"My Hat! I will." He felt in his pockets. "Give me tuppence, someone."

"Rot! Stay here, and don't mess about in the sun."

"Gi' me tuppence."

"I say, Beetle, you aren't stuffy about anything, are you?" said McTurk, handing over the coppers. His tone was serious, for though Stalky often, and McTurk occasionally, manœuvred on his own account, Beetle had never been known to do so in all the history of the confederacy.

"No, I'm not. I'm thinking."

"Well, we'll come, too," said Stalky, with a general's suspicion of his aides.

"'Don't want you."

"Oh, leave him alone. He's been taken worse with a poem," said McTurk. "He'll go burbling down to the Pebble Ridge and spit it all up in the study when he comes back."

"Then what did he want with the tuppence, Turkey? He's gettin' too beastly independent. Hi! There's a bunny. No, it ain't. It's a cat, by Jove! You plug first."

Twenty minutes later a boy with a straw hat at the back of his head, and his hands in his pockets, was staring at workmen as they moved about a half-finished cottage. He produced some ferocious tobacco, and was passed from the forecourt into the interior, where he asked many questions.

"Well, let's have your beastly epic," said Turkey, as they burst into the study, to find Beetle deep in Viollet le Duc and some drawings. "We've had no end of a lark."

"Epic? What epic? I've been down to the coastguard."

"No epic? Then we will slay you, O Beadle," said Stalky, moving to the attack. "You've got something up your sleeve. *I* know, when you talk in that tone!"

"Your Uncle Beetle"—with an attempt to imitate Stalky's war-voice—"is a great man."

"Oh, no; he jolly well isn't anything of the kind. You deceive yourself, Beetle. Scrag him, Turkey!"

"A great man," Beetle gurgled from the floor. "*You* are futile—look out for my tie!—futile burblers. I am the great man. I gloat. Ouch! Hear me!"

"Beetle, deah"—Stalky dropped unreservedly on Beetle's chest—"we love you, an' you're a poet. If I ever said you were a doggaroo, I apologise; but you know as well as we do that you can't do anything by yourself without mucking it."

"I've got a notion."

"And you'll spoil the whole show if you don't tell your Uncle Stalky. Cough it up, ducky, and we'll see what we can do. Notion, you fat impostor—I knew you had a notion when you went away! Turkey said it was a poem."

"I've found out how houses are built. Le' me get up. The floor-joists of one room are the ceiling-joists of the room below."

"Don't be so filthy technical."

"Well, the man told me. The floor is laid on top of those joists—those boards on edge that we crawled over—but the floor stops at a partition. Well, if you get behind a partition, same as you did in the attic, don't you see that you can shove anything you please under the floor between the floor-boards and the lath and plaster of the ceiling below? Look here. I've drawn it."

He produced a rude sketch, sufficient to enlighten the allies. There is no part of the modern school curriculum that deals with architecture, and none of them had yet reflected whether floors and ceilings were hollow or solid. Outside his own immediate interests the boy is as ignorant as the savage he so admires; but he has also the savage's infernal resource.

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"I see," said Stalky. "I shoved my hand there. An' then?"

"An' then . . . They've been calling us stinkers, you know. We might shove somethin' under—sulphur, or something that stunk pretty bad—an' stink 'em out. I know it can be done somehow." Beetle's eyes turned to Stalky handling the diagrams.

"Stinks?" said Stalky interrogatively. Then his face became luminous with delight. "By gum! I've got it. Horrid stinks! Turkey!" He leaped at the Irishman. "This afternoon—just after Beetle went away! *She's* the very thing!"

"Come to my arms, my beamish boy," carolled McTurk, and they fell into each other's arms dancing. "Oh, frabjous day! Calloo, callay! She will! She will!"

"Hold on," said Beetle. "I don't understand."

"Dear man! It shall, though. Oh, Artie, my pure-souled youth, let us tell our darling Reggie about pestiferous Stinkadores."

"Not until after call-over. Come on!"

"I say," said Orrin, stiffly, as they fell into their places along the walls of the gymnasium. "The house are goin' to hold another meeting."

"Hold away, then." Stalky's mind was elsewhere.

"It's about you three this time?"

"All right, give 'em my love . . . *Here, sir*," and he tore down the corridor.

Gambolling like kids at play, with bounds and sidestarts, with caperings and curvetings, they led the almost bursting Beetle to the rabbit-lane, and from under a pile of stones drew forth the new-slain corpse of a cat. Then did Beetle see the inner meaning of what had gone before, and lifted up his voice in thanksgiving for that the world held warriors so wise as Stalky and McTurk.

"Well nourished old lady, ain't she?" said Stalky. "How long d'you suppose it'll take her to get a bit whiff in a confined space?"

"Bit whiff! What a coarse brute you are!" said McTurk. "Can't a poor pussy cat get under King's dormitory-floor to die without your pursuin' her with your foul innuendoes?"

"What did she die under the floor for?" said Beetle, looking to the future.

"Oh, they won't worry about *that* when they find her," said Stalky.

"A cat may look at a king." McTurk rolled down the bank at his own jest. "Pussy, you don't know how useful you're goin' to be to three pure-souled, high-minded boys."

"They'll have to take up the floor for her, same as they did in Number Nine when the rat croaked. Big medicine—heap big medicine! Phew! Oh, I wish I could stop laughin'," said Beetle.

"Stinks! Hi, stinks! Clammy ones!" McTurk croaked as he regained his place. "And"—the exquisite humour of it brought them sliding down together in a tangle—"it's all for the honour of the house, too."

"An' they're holdin' another meetin'—on us," Stalky panted, his knees in the ditch and his face in the long grass. "Well, let's get the bullet out of her and hurry up. The sooner she's bedded out the better."

Between them they did some grisly work with a pen-knife; between them (ask not who buttoned her to his bosom) they took up the corpse and hastened back, Stalky arranging their plan of action at the full trot.

The afternoon sun lying in broad patches on the bed-rugs saw three Loys and an umbrella disappear into a dormitory wall. In five minutes they emerged, brushed themselves all over, washed their hands, combed their hair, and descended.

"Are you sure you shoved her far enough under?" said McTurk suddenly.

"Hang it, man, I shoved her the full length of my arm and Beetle's brolly. That must be about six feet. She's bung in the middle of King's big upper ten bedder. Eligible central situation, *I* call it. She'll stink out his chaps, and Hartopp's and Macrea's, when she really begins to fume. I swear your Uncle Stalky is a great man. Do you realise what a great man he is, Beetle?"

"Well. I had the notion first, hadn't I, only——"

"You couldn't do it without your Uncle Stalky, could you?"

"They've been calling us stinkers for a week now," said McTurk. "Oh, *won't* they catch it!"

"Stinker! Yah! Stink-ah!" rang down the corridor.

"And she's there," said Stalky, a hand on either boy's shoulder. "She—is—there, gettin' ready to surprise 'em. Presently she'll begin to whisper to 'em in their dreams. Then she'll whiff. Golly, how she'll whiff! Oblige me by thinkin' of it for two minutes."

They went to their study in more or less of silence. There they began to laugh—laugh as only boys can. They laughed with their foreheads on the tables, or on the floor, laughed at length curled over the

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backs of chairs or clinging to a bookshelf, laughed themselves limp.

And in the middle of it Orrin entered on behalf of the house.

"Don't mind us, Orrin; sit down. You don't know how we respect and admire you. There's something about your pure, high, young forehead, full of the dreams of innocent boyhood, that's no end fetching. It is, indeed."

"The house sent me in to give you this." He laid a folded sheet of paper on the table and retired with an awful front, pursued down the staircase by renewed peals of hysterical mirth.

"It's the resolution! Oh, read it, someone. I'm too silly sick with laughin' to see," said Beetle.

Stalky jerked it open with a precautionary sniff.

"Phew! Phew! Listen. '*The house notices with pain and contempt the attitude of indifference*'—how many f's in indifference, Beetle?"

"Two for choice."

"Only one here—'*adopted by the occupants of Number Five study in relation to the insults offered to Mr. Prout's house at the recent meeting in Number Twelve form-room, and the house hereby pass a vote of censure on the said study.*' That's all."

"And she bled all down my shirt, too," said Beetle.

"An' I'm catty all over," said McTurk, "though I washed twice."

"An' I nearly broke Beetle's brolly plantin' her where she would blossom."

The situation was beyond speech, but not laughter. There was some attempt that night to demonstrate against the three in their dormitory; so they came forth.

"You see," Beetle began suavely, "the trouble with you is that you're a set of unthinkin' asses. You've no more brains than spidgers. We've told you that heaps of times, haven't we?"

"We'll give all three of you a dormitory lickin'. You always jaw at us as if you were prefects," cried one.

"Oh, no, you won't," said Stalky, "because you know that if you did you'd get the worst of it sooner or later. *We* aren't in any hurry. *We* can afford to wait for our little revenges. You've made howlin' asses of yourselves, and just as soon as King gets hold of your precious resolutions to-morrow you'll find that out. If you aren't sick an' sorry by to-morrow night, I'll—I'll eat my hat."

But or ever the dinner-bell rang next day Prout's were sadly aware of their error. King received stray members of the house with an exaggerated attitude of fear. Did they purpose to cause him to be dismissed from the College by unanimous resolution? What were their views concerning the government of the school, that he might hasten to give effect to them? He would not offend them for worlds; but he feared—he sadly feared—that his own house, who did not pass resolutions (but washed), might somewhat deride.

King was a happy man, and his house, basking in the favour of his smile, made that afternoon a long penance to the misled Prout's. And Prout himself, with a dull and lowering visage, tried to think out the rights and wrongs of it all, only plunging deeper into bewilderment. Why should his house be called "Stinkers"? Truly, it was a small thing, but he had been trained to believe that straws show which way the wind blows, and that there is no smoke without fire. He approached King in common-room with a sense of injustice, but King was pleased to be full of airy persiflage that tide, and brilliantly danced dialectical rings round Prout.

"Now," said Stalky at bedtime, making pilgrimage through the dormitories before the prefects came up, "*now* what have you got to say for yourselves? Foster, Carton, Finch, Longbridge, Marlin, Brett. I heard you chaps catchin' it from King—he made hay of you—an' all you could do was to wriggle an' grin an' say, 'Yes, sir,' an' 'No, sir,' an' 'Oh, sir,' an' 'Please, sir'! You an' your resolution! Urh!"

"Oh, shut up, Stalky."

"Not a bit of it. You're a gaudy lot of resolutionists, you are! You've made a sweet mess of it. Perhaps you'll have the decency to leave us alone in future."

Here the house grew angry, and in many voices pointed out how this blunder would never have come to pass if Number Five study had helped them from the first.

"But you chaps are so beastly conceited, an'—an' you swaggered into the meetin' as if we were a lot of idiots," growled Orrin of the resolution.

"That's precisely what you *are*; that's what we've been tryin' to hammer into your thick heads all this time," said Stalky. "Never mind, we'll forgive you. Cheer up. You can't help bein' asses, you know," and, the enemy's flank deftly turned, Stalky hopped into bed.

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That night was the first of sorrow among the jubilant Kings. By some accident of underfloor draughts the cat did not vex the dormitory beneath which she lay, but the next one to the right, stealing on the air rather as a pale blue sensation than as any poignant offence. But the mere adumbration of an odour is enough for the sensitive nose and clean tongue of youth. Decency demands that we draw several carbonised sheets over what the dormitory said to Mr. King and what Mr. King replied. He was genuinely proud of his house and fastidious in all that concerned their well-being. He came; he sniffed; he said things. Next morning a boy in that dormitory confided to his bosom friend, a fag of Macrea's, that there was trouble in their midst which King would fain keep secret. But the Macrea's boy had also a bosom friend in Prout's, a shock-headed fag of malignant disposition, and when he wormed out the secret, he told—told it in a high-pitched treble that rang along the corridor like a bat's squeak.

"An'—an' they've been calling us 'stinkers' all this week. Why, Harland minor says they simply can't sleep in his dormitory for the stink. Come on!"

"With one shout and with one cry" Prout's juniors hurled themselves into the war, and through the "quarter" between first and second lesson some fifty twelve-year-olds were embroiled on the gravel outside King's windows to a tune whose *leit-motif* was the word 'stinker.'

"Hark to the minute gun at sea!" said Stalky. They were in their study collecting books for second lesson, Latin, with King. "I thought his azure brow was a bit cloudy at prayers. 'She is comin', sister Mary. She is——'"

"If they make such a row now, what will they do when she really begins to look up an' take notice?"

"Well, no vulgar repartee, Beetle. All we want is to keep out of this row like gentlemen."

"'"Tis but a little faded flower.' Where's my Horace? Look here, I don't understand what she means by stinkin' out Rattray's dormitory first. We holed in under White's, didn't we?" said McTurk, with a wrinkled brow.

"Skittish little thing. She's rompin' about all over the place, I suppose."

"My Aunt! King'll be a cheerful customer at second lesson. I haven't prepared my Horace one little bit, either," said Beetle. "Come on."

They were outside the form-room door now. It was within five minutes of the bell, and King might arrive at any moment.

Turkey elbowed into a cohort of scuffling fags, cut out Thornton tertius (he that had been Harland's bosom friend), and bade him tell his tale.

It was a simple one, interrupted by tears. Many of King's house had already battered him for libel.

"Oh, it's nothing," McTurk cried. "He says that King's house stinks. That's all."

"Stale!" Stalky shouted. "We knew that years ago, only we didn't choose to run about shoutin' 'Stinker.' We've got some manners, if they haven't. Catch a fag, Turkey, and make sure of it."

Turkey's long arm closed on a hurried and anxious ornament of the lower second.

"Oh, McTurk, please let me go. I don't stink—I swear I don't!"

"Guilty conscience," cried Beetle. "Who said you did?"

"What d'you make of it?" Stalky punted the small boy into Beetle's arms.

"Snf! Snf! He does, though. I think it's leprosy—or thrush. P'raps it's both. Take it away."

"Indeed, Master Beetle"—King generally came to the house-door for a minute or two as the bell rang—"we are vastly indebted to you for your diagnosis, which seems to reflect almost as much credit on the natural unwholesomeness of your mind as it does upon your pitiful ignorance of the diseases of which you discourse so glibly. We will, however, test your knowledge in other directions."

That was a merry lesson, but, in his haste to scarify Beetle, King clean neglected to give him an imposition, and since at the same time he supplied him with many priceless adjectives for later use, Beetle was well content, and applied himself most seriously throughout third lesson (algebra with little Hartopp) to composing a poem entitled, "The Lazar-house."

After dinner King took his house to bathe off the Pebble Ridge bridge. It was an old promise; but he wished he could have evaded it, for all Prout's lined up by the fives-court and cheered with intention. In his absence not less than half the school invaded the infected dormitory to draw their own conclusions. The cat had gained in the last twelve hours, but a battlefield of the fifth day could not have been so flamboyant as the spies reported.

"My word, she *is* doin' herself proud,"

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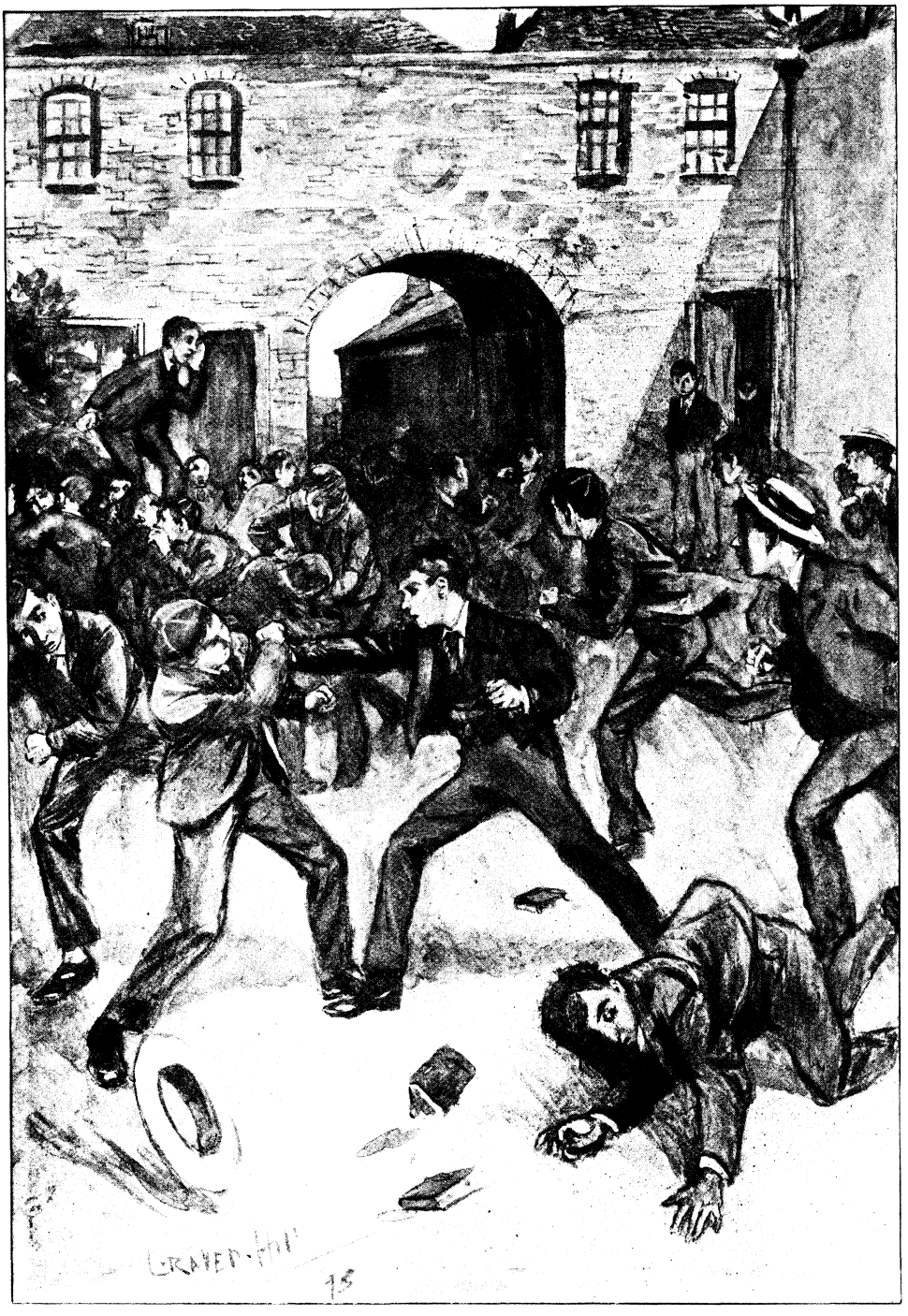

"Prout's juniors hurled themselves into the war."

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said Stalky. "Did you ever smell anything like it? Ah, an' she isn't under White's dormitory at all yet."

"But she will be. Give her time," said Beetle. "She'll twine like a giddy honeysuckle. What howlin' Lazarites they are! No house is justified in makin' itself a stench in the nostrils of decent——"

"High-minded, pure-souled boys. *Do* you burn with remorse and regret?" said McTurk, as they hastened to meet the house coming up from the sea. King had deserted it, so speech was unfettered. Round its front played a crowd of skirmishers—all houses mixed—flying, reforming, shrieking insults. On its tortured flank marched the Hoplites, seniors hurling jests one after another—simple and primitive jests of the Stone Age. To these the three added themselves, dispassionately, with an air of aloofness, almost sadly.

"And they *look* all right, too," said Stalky. "It can't be Rattray, can it? Rattray?"

No answer.

"Rattray, dear? He seems stuffy about something or other. Look here, old man, *we* don't bear any malice about your sending that soap to us last week, do we? Be cheerful, Rat. You can live this down all right. I daresay it's only a few fags. Your house *is* so beastly slack, though."

"You aren't going back to the house, are you?" said McTurk. The victims desired nothing better. "You've simply no conception of the reek up there. Of course, frouzin' as you do, you wouldn't notice it; but, after this nice wash and the clean fresh air, even *you*'d be upset. 'Much better camp on the Burrows. We'll get you some straw. Shall we?"

The house hurried in to the tune of "John Brown's body," sung by loving schoolmates, and barricaded themselves into their form-room. Straightway Stalky chalked a large cross, with "Lord, have mercy upon us!" on the door, and left King to find it.

The wind shifted that night and wafted a carrion reek into Macrea's dormitories; so that boys in nightgowns pounded on the locked door between the houses, entreating King's to wash. Number Five study went to second lesson with not more than half a pound of camphor apiece in their clothing; and King, too wary to ask for explanations, gibbered awhile and hurled them forth. So Beetle finished yet another poem at peace in the study.

"They're usin' carbolic now. Malpas told me," said Stalky. "King thinks it's the drains."

"She'll need a lot o' carbolic," said McTurk. "No harm tryin', I suppose. It keeps King out of mischief."

"I swear I thought he was goin' to kill me when I sniffed just now. He didn't mind Burton major sniffin' at me the other day, though. He never stopped Alexander howlin' 'Stinker' into our form-rooms before—before we doctored 'em. He just grinned," said Stalky. "What was he frothing over you for, Beetle?"

"Aha! That was my subtle jape. I had him on toast. You know he always jaws about the learned Lepsius."

"'Who at the age of four'—*that* chap?" said McTurk.

"Yes. Whenever he hears I've written a poem. Well, just as I was sittin' down, I whispered, 'How is our learned Lepsius?' to Burton major. Old Burt grinned like an owl. *He* didn't know what I was drivin' at; but King jolly well did. That was really why he hove us out. Ain't you grateful? Now shut up. I'm goin' to write the 'Ballad of the Learned Lepsius.'"

"Keep clear of anything coarse, then," said Stalky. "I shouldn't like to be coarse on this happy occasion."

"Not for wo-orlds. What rhymes to 'stenches,' someone?"

In common-room at lunch King discoursed acridly to Prout of boys with prurient minds, who perverted their few and baleful talents to sap discipline and corrupt their equals, to deal in foul imagery and destroy reverence.

"But you didn't seem to consider this when your house called us—ah—stinkers. If you hadn't assured me that you never interfere with another man's house, I should almost believe that it was a few casual remarks of yours that started all this nonsense."

Prout had endured much, for King always took his temper to meals.

"You spoke to Beetle yourself, didn't you? Something about not bathing, and being a water-funk," the school chaplain put in. "I was scoring in the pavilion that day."

"I may have—jestingly. I really don't pretend to remember every remark I let fall among small boys; and full well I know that Beetle has no feelings to be hurt."

"Maybe; but he, or they—it comes to the same thing—have the fiend's own knack of discovering a man's weak place. I confess I rather go out of my way to conciliate

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Number Five study. It may be weak, but so far, I believe, I am the only man here whom they haven't maddened by their—well—attentions."

"That is all beside the point. I flatter myself I can deal with them alone as occasion arises. But if they feel themselves morally supported by those who should wield an absolute and open-handed justice, then I say that my lot is indeed a hard one. Of all things I detest, I admit that anything verging on disloyalty among ourselves is the first."

The common-room looked at one another out of the corners of their eyes, and Prout blushed.

"I deny it absolutely," he said. "Er—in fact, I own that I personally object to all three of them. It is not fair, therefore, to——"

"How long do you propose to allow it?" said King.

"But surely," said Macrae, deserting his usual ally, "the blame, if there be any, rests with you, King. You can't hold them responsible for the—you prefer the good old Anglo-Saxon, I believe—stink in your house. My boys are complaining of it now."

"What can you expect? You know what boys are. Naturally they take advantage of what to them is a Heaven-sent opportunity," said little Hartopp. "What *is* the trouble in your dormitories, King?"

Mr. King explained that as he had made it the one rule of his life never to interfere with another man's house, so he expected not to be too patently interfered with. They might be interested to learn—here the Chaplain heaved a weary sigh—that he had taken all steps that, in his poor judgment, would meet the needs of the case. Nay, further, he had himself expended, with no thought of reimbursement, sums, the amount of which he would not specify, on disinfectants. This he had done because he knew by bitter—by most bitter—experience that the management of the College was slack, dilatory, and inefficient. He might even add almost as slack as the administration of certain houses which now thought fit to sit in judgment on his actions. With a short summary of his scholastic career, and a *précis* of his qualifications, including his degrees, he withdrew, slamming the door.

"Heigho!" said the Chaplain. "Ours is a dwarfing life—a belittling life, my brethren. God help all schoolmasters! They need it."

"I don't like the boys, I own"—Prout dug viciously with the fork into the table-cloth—"and I don't pretend to be a strong man, as you know. But I confess I can't see any conceivable reasons why I should take steps against Stalky and the others because King happens to be annoyed by—by——"

"Falling into the pit he has digged," said little Hartopp. "Certainly not, Prout. No one accuses *you* of setting one house against another through sheer idleness."

"Chalked a large cross on the door, and left King to find it."

"A belittling life—a belittling life." The Chaplain rose. "I go to correct French exercises. By dinner King will have scored off some unlucky child of thirteen; he will repeat to us every word of his brilliant repartees, and all will be well."

"But about those three. Are they so prurient-minded?"

"Nonsense," said little Hartopp. If you thought for a minute, Prout, you would see that the 'precocious flow of fœtid imagery'

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that King complains of is borrowed wholesale from King. *He* 'nursed the pinion that impelled the steel.' Naturally he does not approve. Come into the smoking-room for a minute. It isn't fair to listen to boys; but they should be now rubbing it into King's house outside. Little things please little minds."

The dingy den off the common-room was never used for anything except gowns. Its windows were ground glass; one could not see out of it, but one could hear almost every word on the gravel outside. A light and wary footstep came up from Number Five.

"Rattray!" in a subdued voice—Rattray's study fronted that way. "D'you know if Mr. King's anywhere about? I've got a——" McTurk discreetly left the end of the sentence open.

"No. He's gone out," said Rattray unguardedly.

"Ah! The learned Lepsius is airing himself, is he? His Royal Highness has gone to fumigate." McTurk climbed on the railings, where he held forth like the never-wearied rook.

"Now in all the Coll. there was no stink like the stink of King's house, for it stank vehemently and none knew what to make of it. Save King. And he washed the fags *pr'vatim et seriatim*. In the fishpools of Hesbon washed he them, with an apron about his loins."

"Shut up, you mad Irishman!" There was the sound of a golf ball spurling up gravel.

"It's no good getting wrathy, Rattray. We've come to jape with you. Come on, Beetle. They're all at home. You can wind 'em."

"Where's the Pomposo Stinkadore? 'Tisn't safe for a pure-souled, high-minded boy to be seen round his house these days. Gone out, has he? Never mind. I'll do the best I can, Rattray. I'm *in loco parentis* just now."

("One for you, Prout," whispered Macrea, for this was Mr. Prout's pet phrase.)

"I have a few words to impart to you, my young friends. We will discourse together awhile."

Here Prout sputtered: Beetle, in a high head voice, had chosen a favourite gambit of King's.

"I repeat, Master Rattray, we will confer, and the matter of our discourse shall not be stinks, for that is a loathsome and obscene word. We will, with your good leave—granted, I trust, Master Rattray, granted, I trust—study this—this scabrous upheaval of latent demoralisation. What impresses me most is not so much the blatant indecency with which you swagger abroad under your load of putrescence" (you must imagine this discourse punctuated with golf balls, but Rattray was ever a bad shot) "as the cynical immorality with which you revel in your abhorrent aromas. Far be it from me to interfere with another's house——"

("Good Lord!" said Prout, "but this *is* King.")

"Line for line, letter for letter; listen," said little Hartopp.)

"But to say that you stink, as certain lewd fellows of the baser sort aver, is to say nothing—less than nothing. In the absence of your beloved house-master, for whom no one has a higher regard than myself, I will, if you will allow me, explain the grossness—the unparalleled enormity—the appalling factor of the stenches (I believe in the good old Anglo-Saxon word), stenches, sir, with which you have seen fit to infect your house. . . . Oh, bother! I've forgotten the rest, but it was very beautiful. Aren't you grateful to us for labourin' with you this way, Rattray? Lots of chaps 'ud never have taken the trouble; but we're grateful, Rattray."

"Yes, we're horrid grateful," croaked McTurk. "We don't forget that soap. *We're* polite. Why ain't you polite, Rat?"

"Hallo!" Stalky cantered up, his cap over one eye. "Exhortin' the Whiffers, eh? I'm afraid they're too far gone to repent. Rattray! White! Perowne! Malpas! No answer. This is distressin'. This is truly distressin'. Bring out your dead, you glandered lepers!"

"You think yourself funny, don't you?" said Rattray, stung from his dignity by this last. "It's only a rat or something under the floor. We're going to have it up to-morrow."

"Don't try to shuffle it off on a poor dumb animal, and dead, too. I loathe prevarication. 'Pon my soul, Rattray——"

"Hold on. The Hartoffles never said ''Pon my soul' in all his little life," said Beetle critically.

("Ah!" said Prout to little Hartopp.)

"Upon my word, sir, upon my word, sir, I expected better things of you, Rattray. Why can you not own up to your misdeeds like a man? Have *I* ever shown any lack of confidence in *you?*"

(It's not brutality," murmured little Hartopp, as though answering a question no one had asked. "It's boy: only boy.")

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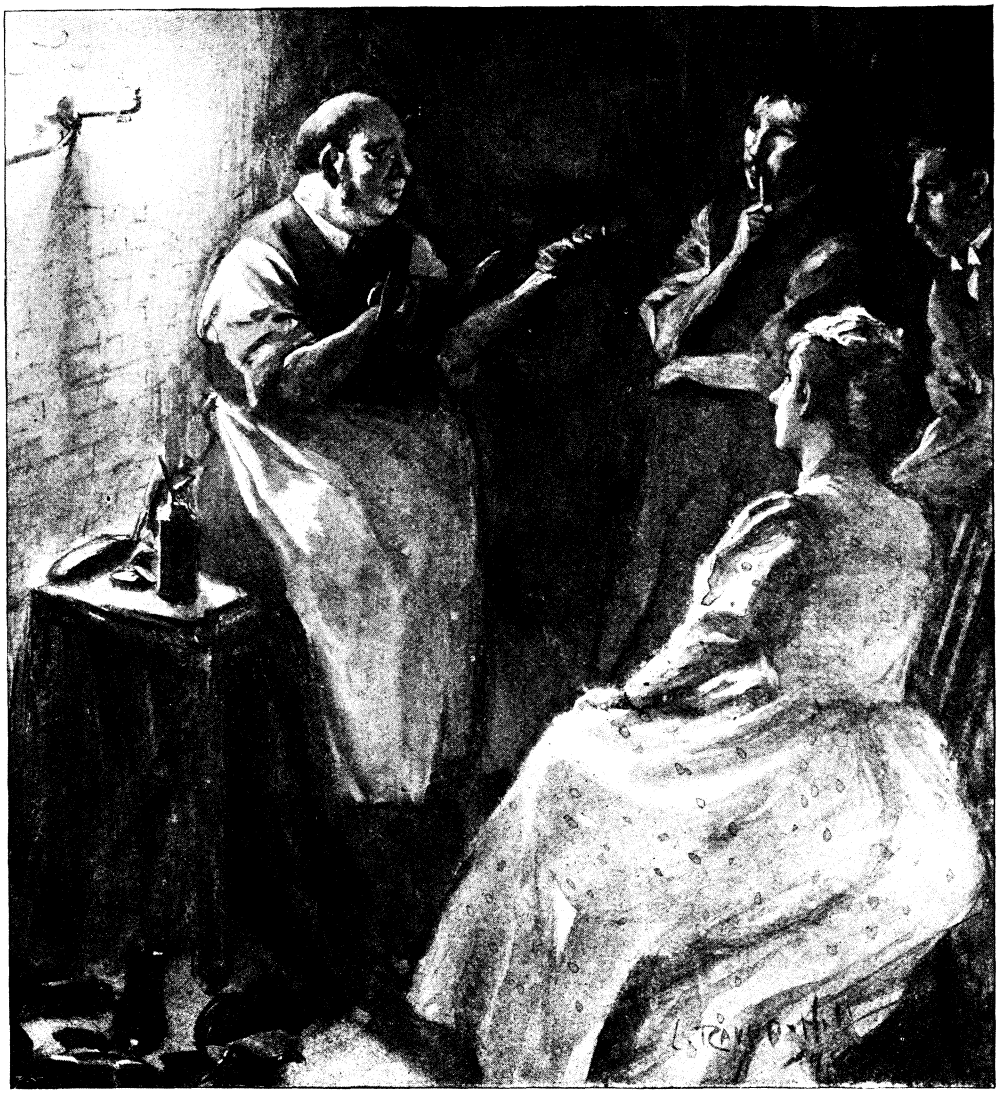

"'Ask me no questions, I'll give 'ee no lies.'"

"And this was the house," Stalky changed from a pecking, fluttering voice to tragic earnestness. "This was the—the—open cess-pit that dared to call us 'stinkers.' And now—and now, it tries to shelter itself behind a dead rat. You annoy me, Rattray. You disgust me! You irritate me unspeakably. Thank Heaven! I am a man of equable temper——"

("This is to your address, Macrea," said Prout.

"I fear so, I fear so.")

"Or I should scarcely be able to contain myself before your mocking visage."

"*Cavé!*" in an undertone. Beetle had spied King sailing down the corridor.

"And what may you be doing here, my little friends?" the house-master began. "I had a fleeting notion—correct me if I am wrong (the listeners with one accord choked)—that if I found you outside my house I should visit you with dire pains and penalties."

"We were just goin' for a walk, sir," said Beetle.

"And you stopped to speak to Rattray *en route*."

"Yes, sir. We've been throwing golf balls," said Rattray, coming out of the study.

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("Old Rat is more of a diplomat than I thought. So far he is strictly within the truth," said little Hartopp. "Observe the ethics of it, Prout.")

"Oh, you were sporting with them, were you? I must say I do not envy you your choice of associates. I fancied they might have been engaged in some of the prurient discourse with which they have been so disgustingly free of late. I should strongly advise you to direct your steps most carefully in the future. Pick up those golf balls." He passed on.

* * * * *

Next day Richards, who had been a carpenter in the Navy, and to whom odd jobs were confided, was ordered to take up a dormitory floor, for Mr. King held that something must have died there.

"We need not neglect all our work for a trumpery incident of this nature; though I am quite aware that little things please little minds. Yes, I have decreed the boards to be taken up after lunch under Richards' auspices. I have no doubt it will be vastly interesting to a certain type of so-called intellect; but any boy of my house or another's found on the dormitory stairs will *ipso facto* render himself liable to three hundred lines."

The boys did not collect on the stairs, but most of them waited outside King's. Richards had been bound to cry the news from the attic window, and, if possible, to exhibit the corpse.

"'Tis a cat, a dead cat!" Richards' face showed purple at the window. He had been in the chamber of death and on his knees for some time.

"Cat be blowed!" cried McTurk. "It's a dead fag left over from last term. Three cheers for King's dead fag!"

They cheered lustily.

"Show it, show it! Let's have a squint at it!" yelled the juniors. "Give her to the Bug-hunters (this was the natural history society). The cat that looked at the King—and died of it! Hoosh! Yai! Yaow! Maiow! Ftzz!" were some of the cries that followed.

Again Richards appeared.

"She've been"—he checked himself suddenly—"dead a long taime."

The school roared.

"Well, come on out for a walk," said Stalky in a well-chosen pause. "It's all very disgustin', and I do hope the Lazar-house won't do it again."

"Do what?" a King's boy cried furiously.

"Kill a poor, innocent cat every time you want to get off washing. It's awfully hard to distinguish between you as it is. I prefer the cat, I must say. She isn't quite so whiff. What are you goin' to do, Beetle?"

"*Je vais gloater. Je vais gloater tout le* blessed afternoon. *Jamais j'ai gloaté comme je gloaterai aujourd'hui. Nous bunkerons aux bunkers.*"

And it seemed good to them so to do.

* * * * *

Down in the basement, where the gas flickers and the boots stand in racks, Richards, amid his blacking brushes, held forth to Oke of the common-room, Gumbly of the dining-halls, and fair Lena of the laundry.

"Yiss. Her were in a shockin' staate an' condition. Her nigh made me sick, I tal 'ee. But I rowted un out, an' I made all shipshape, though her smelt like to bilges."

"Her died mousin', I rackon, poor thing," said Lena.

"Then her moused different from any made cat o' God's world, Lena. I up with the top-board, an' she were lying on her back, an' I turned un ovver with the brume-handle, an' 'twas her back was all covered with the plaster from 'twixt the lathin'. Yiss, I tal 'ee. An' under her head there lay, like, so's to say, a little pillow o' plaster druv up in front of her by raison of her slidin' along on her back. No cat niver went mousin' on her back, Lena. Someone had shoved her along right underneath, so far as they could shove un. Cats don't make theyselves pillows for to die on. Shoved along, she were, when she was settin' for to be cold, laike."

"Oh, yeou'm too clever to live, Fatty. Yeou go get wed an' taught some sense," said Lena, the affianced of Gumbly.

"'Larned a little 'fore iver some maidens was born. Sarved in the Queen's Navy, I have, where yeou'm taught to use your eyes. Yeou go 'tend your own business, Lena."

"Do 'ee mean what you'm been tellin' us?" said Oke.

"Ask me no questions, I'll give 'ee no lies. Bullet-hole clane thru from side to side, an' tu heart-ribs broke like withies. I seed un when I turned un ovver. They'm clever, oh, they'm clever, but they'm not too clever for old Richards! 'Twas on the born tip o' my tongue to tell, tu, but . . . he said us niver washed, he did. Let his dom boys call us 'stinkers,' he did. Sarve un dom well raight, I say!"

Richards spat on a fresh boot and fell to his work, chuckling.

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HOW THEY DANCE IN LONDON.

By W. Pett Ridge.

Illustrated by A. J. Finberg.

IT is best to be frank, especially when no alternative offers. Let it therefore be at once stated that in this article no information can be given on the subject of State balls. The reason is, "Ignorance, my dear sir, sheer ignorance."

There is, however, plenty of dancing to be had in London, even though the Lord Chamberlain should ignore and Society hostesses forget. For instance, you can send your guinea to the secretary of a select charity dance in the West End, and, your guinea, on the recommendation of a member of the committee, being accepted, a gorgeous card arrives, which, stuck conspicuously in a mirror where it cannot be easily overlooked, is calculated to give to your friends a vague idea that you are on terms of pleasant intimacy with the Duke of This or the Marchioness of That, whose names are inscribed on the ticket in letters of gold.

You will not find these illustrious people at the dance at Portman Rooms, but you will find other people there, and the young men who are stewards will pounce upon you as though they were an old time press-gang and you a likely young fellow for His Majesty's Navy. Upon its being proved that you are not one of those who catch trains, and that you can reverse without accident, you will find yourself introduced by the energetic press-gang to partners who will tell you what they think of the two Ravoglis, and what their cousin, who, poor fellow, is out at Gibraltar, says privately about Lord Wolseley and the War Office. Discovery, in the course of conversation, of a mutual acquaintance means an introduction to dear mother, and then, unless you are very careful, a casual invitation will be darted at you as you leave. "The first and third Sundays we are *always* at home. *So* glad

A DANCE AT THE PORTMAN ROOMS.

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A FANCY DRESS BALL AT KENSINGTON TOWN HALL.

to see you if you can call. Haverstock Hill sounds a long way off, I know; but, really, it's but a stone's throw from everywhere. *Good*-bye."

Fancy dress balls are mainly joys of the imagination; disillusion comes on close acquaintance. Nevertheless, an art student's fancy dress ball is diverting in a demure, careful way, only that most of the young men artists come as Pierrots (which counts for monotony), and most of the young women artists select characters whose costumes will come in useful afterwards for the dressing of models (which is at once wise and thrifty). Artists are more at ease in eccentric dress than other folk, and they comport themselves with something of naturalness. But the ordinary City man, attired as a cavalier of the year 1640, going home to West Kensington after a fancy dress ball held in 1898, with his wife attired as Fame, a long trumpet sticking out of the window of the four-wheeler, is a sight that looks too much like an illustration in a comic journal to be really amusing.

Cricket club dances perform a double duty. They

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give opportunity for exercise on a polished floor, and, at the same time, they sometimes lift the club out of a pond of debt. They are called *Soirées Dansantes* if the secretary has had a Continental education, but there is nothing improper in this; the management, so far as decorum is concerned, is admirable. If they have a fault, it is, perhaps, that each member of the club will insist upon bringing all of his sisters (or perhaps it is that all of the sisters will insist upon coming with him), and when the proportion of ladies to gentlemen is as four to one, it follows that the most dexterous management is required in order to prevent ladies from leaving early and gloomily, with the awful threat that they will never go to a dance again in all their lives, never! Meek young men, once caught, find themselves passed on from sister to sister as though they were cake, and there is a fearsome story of a business-like young woman lending her partner to an elder sister, for a set of quadrilles and two waltzes, in exchange for the use of the elder sister's bicycle on Thursday afternoons. Happy the engaged young lady who has a faithful knight to enter his name long and lengthways adown the card from No. 1 to No. 24! In her eye is no anxiety; her fan does not shiver with sympathetic annoyance; if she sits out a dance it is only to give her companion an opportunity of assuring her once more that she is, upon his word, not only the most delightful girl in the room, but in all London.

THE DANCING MAN.

"Indeed," says the reckless youth, "if it comes to that, I don't suppose there's a prettier girl in the whole world!"

"Robert!" replies the young lady reprovingly, "you should *not* say such things."

"But I *do* say such things," urges the youth manfully; "I can't help saying them."

"Oh, well," remarks the lady, relenting, "if you can't help saying them, I suppose I must listen to you. It's really very absurd, though, to talk in that manner, and I don't suppose you mean half what you say. But go on."

Engaged young couples shunt each other dreamily through the waltz at cricket club dances, staring absorbedly at each other's eyes; they do not mind running against people, and it does not greatly disturb them if other couples bump against them. As antidote to this languorous style, you encounter the furiously jolly pair who swing madly around the room, damaging everybody, collecting sprays of flowers and fans as they go, finally enlisting a rout seat to join in their eccentric whirling.

The real enjoyment of dancing is seen at the Saturday and Monday select quadrille assemblies held at a public hall under the direction of Mr. Jas. Turveydrop. Single tickets, one shilling; double tickets, to admit lady and gent, one shilling and sixpence. Efficient band provided. The newest valses taught. A juvenile class every Wednesday afternoon, conducted by Miss Turveydrop (late of the principal provincial theatres. "A modern Taglioni," *vide* Press). Patrons arrive at Mr. Turveydrop's hall on Saturday evenings at half-past eight, by tram or by 'bus. Gentlemen carry slippers in brown paper parcels, and a buttonhole flower is fixed inside their hat; ladies, bright-eyed and expectant, in long cloaks, and bearing

A PROFESSOR OF DANCING.

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fans, trip up the steps and separate there to meet again a few minutes later in the hall, where other couples are already waiting on the rout seats, and where Miss Turveydrop, who is a little thin, perhaps, and a little old, but very pleasant, flutters about in yellow, like a restless canary, chirruping her welcomes. At the entrance are threatening notices—

GENTLEMEN ARE REQUESTED TO WEAR DARK CLOTHES.

And another—

IT IS REQUESTED THAT NO SINGING BE INDULGED IN.

The first rule is not universally obeyed, for one young patron is in a light tweed suit, but, as compensation, he wears a white dress tie and new brown gloves. When the first quadrille is started (Miss Turveydrop playing with pronounced emphasis the piano, a sleepy man the violin, and Mrs. Turveydrop the harp), it is soon obvious that the second rule also is a by-law that is not strictly enforced. Because the lancers is a medley

THE FUNNY MAN.

of comic songs, it is impossible for the young men who are humorously minded to refrain from singing, as Mr. Turveydrop, in the centre of the room, shouts, "Ladies' chain!"

I'm a capting in the army,
Oh, yes I am, yes I am;
Folks may think I'm somewhat barmy,
Perraps I am, perraps I am.
Although I'm slightly passy,
I'm a good Salvation lassie,
And I——

There are cliques at the Shilling Saturdays as definitely ring-fenced as those in more expensive society, and when a youth who helps his father in the shop slides up to a lady whose father goes to the City, and says, "Disengaged, miss?" the lady whose father goes to the City gazes coldly and distantly at the youth

AFTER THE BALL.

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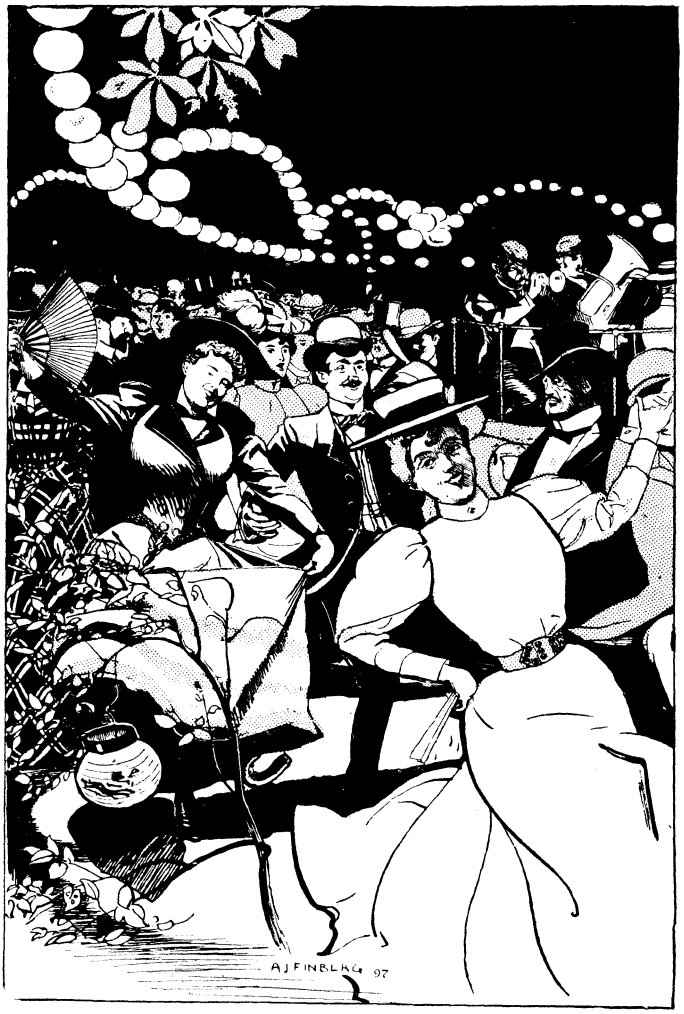
who helps his father in the shop, and says, "I beg pardon?" in a way that makes him retire, desolate, to bewail his lowly birth. For there are at least five coteries at Turveydrop's, five separate and distinct coteries, and outside of all are one or two forlorn young men and wistful young women, who are not admitted to any of the five, and these will, perhaps, some evening find in this fact a common bond and form a strictly exclusive set of their own. Meanwhile, Miss Turveydrop dances at times with the disconsolate young men, and smiles determinedly, saying, with apologetic air, as they stamp upon her slippers, "I'm afraid I haven't quite got your step," the while her father leads the wistful young ladies out for the set dances, and talks reminiscently of Willis's Rooms in the early sixties.



AT ROSHERVILLE GARDENS.

There is a chrysalis stage for all accomplished butterflies; this is found in the dancing academy of the minor suburbs. At the dancing academy is received, in the month of October, by the two excellent young old ladies who are called on the handbills "directresses," raw material, made up of clumsy young men and shy, awkward young women. By December these are able to dance without maiming their partner; by March they are accomplished young sparks, able to hold their own in any society and to conduct themselves in the barn dance with grace and elegance. For this the amiable directresses charge one shilling for one lesson, or ten-and-six "till perfect." Single lessons are for those who feel confident, but not very confident, and, having a dance near at hand, come to the academy for a brief regilding before they shine resplendently on their peers. Leaning young women, who have modelled themselves on the Tower of Pisa, are here taken in hand and changed into upright Trafalgar Square columns. The right and commendable way to walk across a room is one of the secrets that the directresses know and are willing to impart upon fee being paid. They are good souls, the directresses, living a life that is not without its anxieties; in an ideal world they would be subsidised by the State.

One more scene. A long, narrow, shopless street in South London. Matrons at the doorstep quarrelling, children playing stolidly in the roadway, a harmonium in a back room of one of the houses grunting its scales laboriously. There is greyness in the air

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and gloom, and you are half persuaded to resign your commission as a determined optimist and enlist in the opponent army. Suddenly round the corner from the main street comes a green baize-covered case on wheels, pulled by a brown-faced, dark-eyed woman. The handle is jerked, the piano organ splutters, but the Italian woman is determined, and the organ, giving way, takes up a waltz where it was stopped in the last street. On that instant the matrons cease wrangling, the children give up their melancholy games, and thirty pairs of youngsters step gaily around the organ; on the pavements the grown-up people waltz. The whole street is alight with joy. Infants so small that they look like the grandchildren of ordinary infants, pirouette and do the American twist with their little limbs, keeping time all the while in a way that is amazing; the remarkable point is that they can dance to any music, so that when the piano organ jerks from a waltz into a martial air, they contrive to dance in polka time. And when the piano, like a good, loyal immigrant, plays the National Anthem, they manage to step a frolicsome jig to its music. They are quite happy; for a space they have danced themselves away from Walworth, away from London, into another world.

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.—BY LUCIEN DAVIS, R.I.

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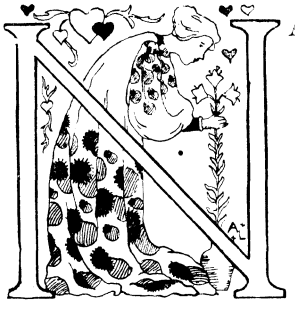
MR. HEATHWELL'S OVERCOAT.

By Edith A. Raston.

Illustrated by Harold Copping.



NARANILLA and Edenburn lie just five miles from each other in one of those well-watered districts of South Australia where for six months of the year the rich, dark soil is moist with the constant soakage as the hill-tops catch the grey mists that hover above them. When fine days intervene between the seasons of rain the dwellers on the plains below can see the mists curling up into the blue sky in white, fleecy masses.

Here, in the summer the days are warm and sunny, but rarely oppressive, and when, in time to come, the railway touches an adjacent point to these two townships, the city will no doubt number Edenburn and Naranilla among favourite summer resorts, and their old-fashioned characteristics will then depart for ever. But as yet they are intensely rural. The people live simply and quietly, and rarely die before they have attained the age of three-score years and ten.

When Tom Heathwell, State school teacher, recovered from typhoid and was ordered a year's comparative rest in the country, his thoughts turned instantly to Edenburn as the abode of peace and tranquillity. He knew that the school would be vacant at Easter, and he asked for and obtained the post of head teacher.

As he stepped from the coach on Saturday afternoon, the first thing that struck him was the scent of the quinces which hung in golden balls underneath their broad green leaves in almost every orchard. The second thing was that all Edenburn appeared to be out of doors. He was naturally modest, and concluded that it was one of the pleasant customs of the township to turn out in force on the arrival of the coach from Adelaide.

Directly the rumble of wheels was heard, Mrs. Weston and her married sister, Mrs. Spindler, had rushed to the parlour window which commanded a view of the main road. Mr. Weston followed more leisurely, as became a man of intellect, but his interest in the new teacher was none the less keen.

"Is he come?" he asked, peering over his wife's shoulder.

"Yes, the mail's just stopped, and 'e's got out. Now 'e's talkin' to Gregory—'e's got 'is back turned—what a pity 'is furniture ain't 'ere yet! They said down at the store it was comin' yesterday!"

"Look, Marier!" Mrs. Spindler suddenly exclaimed in excited tones, "I do believe—yes, it is!—there's his things in Munson's cart just turned the bend of the road!"

"So there is! Well, I'm blest! You've got sharp eyes, Anner! What a load, too! Just as if he was a married man. Look! 'e's comin' this way. Pale, ain't he?"

"They say he's been ill, and asked for an easy school for a bit till he gets strong. Just look at that furniture! Chairs an' tables an' all sorts! He'll need a hand to get it in!"

"Look at that big case slopin' off at the top. That'll be an 'armonium."

"A horgan," corrected Mrs. Spindler. "It's too 'igh like for the other."

"Well! if there ain't Mrs. Pinfold starin' at 'im out of her front gate just as if she'd never seen a man before. Trust 'er for knowin' what's goin' on. They say 'is sister's comin' to keep house for 'im, but she ain't with 'im. There, now, 'e's goin' in the gate of the school-house. What a fine overcoat! Tommy, run down and give mother's compliments an' see if 'e'd like a kittle boiled, or anythink!"

But Tommy was too late. Already Mrs. Pinfold had personally carried to Mr. Heathwell an invitation to come and sit over a cup of tea with her, which he accepted with alacrity, and received, not only a meal, but a spirited account of the history of Edenburn and its people since Mrs. Pinfold had first appeared among them.

Tom wondered privately whether he, in his turn, would be treated to the same process of vivisection.

It was enough for the township to know

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that the teacher and his furniture had arrived together on Saturday evening to bring to his assistance a willing army of helpers. With the aid of several men and their wives, as

"A small boy with a jug of milk in one hand and a dish of cold bacon in the other."

much as possible was done to get Mr. Heathwell's house into order before Sunday.

After the first quarter of an hour, during which Tom attempted to direct the proceedings and found his suggestions good-naturedly but firmly rejected, he saw that his only course was implicit and submissive obedience.

"Bless you," Mrs. Spindler said, lifting the kitchen table from beneath the window (where Tom had placed it) to the middle of the room, "that'll never do. You'll make splashes on the wall, and then when the next teacher comes there'll be rows because the paint's dirty."

It is only fair to Mrs. Spindler to remark that she was unprejudiced, and that if in the first instance Mr. Heathwell had put the table in the middle of the room, she would have directed its removal to the window because of the view it commanded.

Tired and busy as he was, Tom made time to enjoy that same view as he passed backwards and forwards. It was growing too dark to see the landscape distinctly, but on the low, rounded hill-tops the light glowed in golden patches, and in the valleys and the distances beyond were deep, purple shadows. The orchards, which an hour before flashed red and gold and green, were now outlined in sober vandyke, but with the trim, whitewashed cottages which they embowered they still suggested to Tom's mind a world of refreshment and peace. The thin tinkle of the cow-bells was softened by distance; the mellow evening air was like a benediction.

Mrs. Pinfold's sharp voice broke in on his contentment. "Yes, it's a pretty place," she said approvingly, noting the expression of Tom's face. "It's pretty in summer when it's green and leafy, and it's pretty in winter when the sun's shinin' on the wet leaves. And the people's nice. You'll find they'll take a friendly interest in you."

Nothing could have been more overwhelming than the friendly interest that Tom's new friends *did* take in him and his belongings. Books, shirts, cooking utensils—all passed under critical review, and by Monday night all Edenburn knew where he bought his hats, and how many stops there were in his organ. By degrees his kindly assistants departed, leaving Tom in the midst of what appeared to him a hopeless chaos. Only Mrs. Pinfold remained, intent on showing him how to make a kettle boil, and elicit as much of his family history as should serve her for private contemplation in the quiet, wakeful watches of the night.

"You've never boarded alone, I suppose?" she said tentatively.

"No."

"How long before your sister comes up?"

"A fortnight."

"Been used to housework—you, I mean?"

"No."

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"I should have thought you'd have gone out to board till your sister comes."

"No," said Tom firmly; "I intend to bach."

Even Mrs. Pinfold finally departed, and Tom went to bed feeling as though he had gone back fifteen years in his life, and that maternal influence still directed his actions.

"I wonder if I dare get up in the morning until I'm called!" he said to himself with a grim smile as he dived underneath the blankets. The first thing he was conscious of on Sunday morning was a violent thumping at the back door.

He jumped up in a hurry, and found on the threshold a small boy with a jug of milk in one hand and a dish of cold bacon in the other.

"Please, mother thought you mightn't have anythink tasty for breakfast," he explained, and then departed hastily, having no great opinion of the tender mercies of teachers.

Mr. Heathwell received five invitations to dinner and three to tea, one of which in each case he accepted.

It was at the tea-table of Mrs. Watson that he met Miss Dennis, the teacher from Naranilla. She was a pleasant, ladylike girl, and he would have enjoyed her society more had it not been that the host and hostess considered it their duty to keep the conversation running on scholastic lines. Much information was forthcoming as to the relative merits of the two schools, the number of children in each, and the particular gifts and graces required by the respective teachers in the two townships, until between Miss Dennis and Tom there sprang up a sympathy as of hunted animals, who are, nevertheless, aware that the pursuers have no evil intentions toward the quarry.

"You two'll soon be fine good friends," Mrs. Watson said reassuringly. "You'll be comparin' schools and lendin' each other books and all sorts."

"I offer Miss Dennis the loan of my library on the spot," said Tom, taking up the challenge. "Perhaps you might care to see some of the magazines," he added, turning to her. "I take several, and should be very happy to lend them to you if you like."

"Thank you very much," she said gratefully.

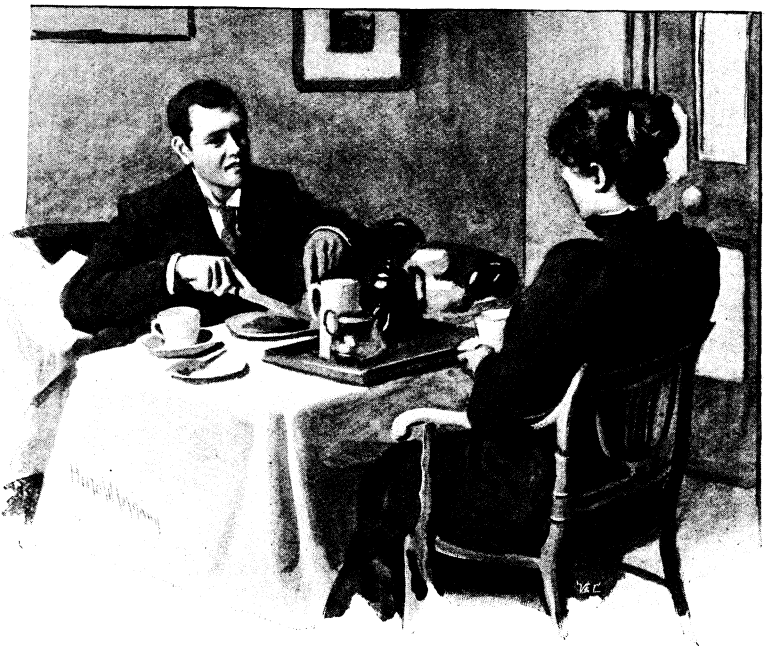
When Miss Dennis departed for Naranilla that evening she carried with her a goodly roll of recent magazines, with a promise of more when she had finished those.

"So you saw Miss Dennis last night?" Mrs. Pinfold took occasion to remark when she came in between school hours on Monday to see if Mr. Heathwell had supplied himself with butter—her own manufacture of that commodity being an article which she was desirous of placing on the market.

"Yes."

"And what did you think of her?"

Tom shied a little at the very direct question. "I only saw her for half an hour."



"Tom was surprised to find that his appetite had not utterly deserted him."

"That was long enough to know. I took your measure in five minutes."

"Probably," said Tom calmly. "But Miss Dennis, having lived near this neigh-

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bourhood for four years, has had opportunities of growth and development that an unkindly Providence has denied me."

Mrs. Pinfold looked up at him sideways. She was not quite sure how to take this remark.

"We all like you," she said in a mollifying tone. "I says to Mrs. Watson, 'There's grit and goodness in that young fellar, though you can't drive 'im.' Them was my very words. And I hope," she added, as a sort of benediction, "that there'll be the same nice feelin' between you and Edenburn as there is between Miss Dennis and Naranilla."

"I hope so, too," said Tom.

Having by some occult means discovered that he was butterless, Mrs. Pinfold proceeded to remove one pound from her basket to a plate which she reached from the dresser, remarking, "There you are, sir; it's one and six the pound, as good butter as you'll find in the country; and pay me when you like. And as for Miss Dennis, as I was speakin' of, she's the friend of all and the enemy o' none. She's had her trials, too, poor thing! She buried her mother seven year ago, and her father the year before that, and her sister went off with a young fellar as hadn't a penny to his name. She's keepin' a brother at college out of her earnin's."

"Miss Dennis must be a very communicative young woman," said Tom, speaking his thoughts aloud.

"Lor', no!" said Mrs. Pinfold placidly. "I just catch a 'int here and a 'int there, and then make it up like a book."

Tom wondered how many such contributions to Mrs. Pinfold's literary skill he had made, as he watched her plaid shawl retreating through the gate.

By Monday night he was thoroughly tired out. On Tuesday he was aching all over. On Wednesday his head throbbed so badly that he could hardly bear to hear the children's voices in school. By the end of another two days he knew that he was in the clutches of influenza. All day Saturday he lay on the couch in his little sitting-room and grumbled at the world in general.

Mrs. Pinfold was too busy to visit him, and as no one guessed how ill he felt, he was left to his own diversions. By six o'clock he had arrived at the conclusion that life was not worth living. His head was burning, the rest of his body seemed cold, his eiderdown he scorned as a thing of great pretensions but of no warmth or substance. He was feeling lonely, but he dreaded intensely the idea of the ubiquitous Mrs. Pinfold ministering to his necessities. He wondered why he had ever dreamed of Edenburn as a place of refuge and rest.

Just as Tom reached this stage of his reflections there was a light tap at the door.

"Come in," he said, trying with marked non-success not to speak irritably.

There was no immediate response. Presently the knock was repeated more boldly.

"*Come in*," he repeated with an emphasis due to the pains of influenza.

The door was opened at once, and Tom shut his eyes to keep out the vision of Mrs. Pinfold and her familiar plaid shawl. His nerves, in a state of high tension, were waiting for her shrill soprano to vibrate through his brain.

There was a silence of two or three moments. Then a voice—young, strong, sympathetic—said, "Excuse me, I fear I am intruding."

Tom opened his eyes quickly and sat straight up, sending the eiderdown to the foot of the couch with a vigorous kick as he recognised in his visitor the friend of all and the enemy o' none. She had come to change her magazines.

"I beg your pardon," he said rising. "I thought it was my—Mrs. Pinfold."

But as he spoke the floor appeared to be undergoing a sudden upheaval, and he put out an uncertain hand to steady himself. It came in contact with Miss Dennis's firm, young shoulder. All her womanly instinct had risen to his aid.

"You are ill," she said gently, "you must lie down again; never mind me. How hot you are! Is no one nursing you?"

Tom sank back among the cushions with a sigh of mingled pain and relief.

"Have you had any tea, Mr. Heathwell?"

"No."

"Nor dinner?"

"N—no."

"I think I had better call someone in."

"No," came in fierce tones from the couch, "I won't have any of those pottering women about." Then he got on to his feet again. "Excuse me, Miss Dennis——"

"Lie down again or I shall excuse nothing," she said authoritatively. Then she added in a meeker tone, "You are sure you won't let me bring a neighbour in—Mrs. Watson, or——?"

"Quite sure, thanks."

"You wouldn't—perhaps you would—let me make you a little tea?"

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Tom looked up at the honest, freckled face; the firm, well-moulded chin, the steady grey eyes beneath the white forehead; and life took on a brighter aspect.

"You are tremendously kind, but I couldn't think of bothering you," he said rather wistfully.

"Thank you so much for the permission," Miss Dennis said, unfastening her gloves. "Will you ask me to take off my hat?"

Tom smiled, and caught an answering gleam in his visitor's eyes. He began to feel that his physical discomfort was not the only goal for his thoughts.

"I see you have the remains of a fire," Miss Dennis said. "That kettle shall boil in five minutes."

Tom watched her admiringly as she dived as though by instinct into certain cupboards and brought forth cups and saucers and other accessories to a comfortable meal.

"I've got a beastly cold, or I wouldn't lie here and see you waiting on me like this," he said presently, in a tone of hypocritical regret.

"Influenza, I think, from your symptoms. I'm so sorry to trouble you, but where's the teapot?"

"In the bottom drawer."

Miss Dennis discovered it there among an assortment of tea-towels and dusters.

"Why do you keep it in the bottom drawer?" Miss Dennis inquired presently as she skilfully directed the course of a poached egg on to the middle of the buttered toast.

"Every other place seemed full," said Tom meekly. "I wanted to write on this table because it was warmer here, so I cleared all the things off at one sweep."

"And then you teach hygienic housekeeping to your scholars—cleanliness, and ventilation, and so on?"

"Pooh!" said Tom, "no household could be conducted on the fancy lines laid down in the school books. A week's experience has taught me that."

"'It's awfully shabby, I know,' Tom began."

"Oh!"

"The fact is," said Tom, spreading himself, so to speak, "human nature is not prone to aim too high, so the ideals have to be skied in order to make it reach up as high as possible. Take, for instance, the idea that

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all cooking utensils should be thoroughly cleansed after using. Yesterday morning I spent twenty minutes trying to scrape out a porridge saucepan, and then I had to shove the thing under the first curtain I came across without finishing it, or else every youngster in the school would have seen my struggles and made copy of them."

"I wondered why you kept saucepans among your boots."

"That is not the point," said Tom severely.

"No? A little water left to soak in your

"'I see this little kerchief stickin' out of the pocket.'"

pan would have saved you any trouble, or the addition of common soda would have simplified matters still more. There is such a thing as scientific housekeeping."

"Score," said Tom, so quietly and with such a chastened air that Miss Dennis's bright eyes flashed a look of wonder that he should give in so readily. In truth, he was thinking what a sense of home and refreshment Miss Dennis had brought with her. Whether she scolded or scoffed, or agreed with him, it was all one; her very presence gave him a keen sense of pleasure.

Tom was surprised to find that his appetite had not utterly deserted him. With his new friend sitting opposite and talking to him in her full, clear voice, he certainly did ample justice to the dainty fare she put before him. After tea she retired to the kitchen, from whence Tom could hear the clatter of china and other noises proceeding from her efforts to reduce the chaos by means of a sweeping-brush and a little feminine management. It was raining when she came back to the sitting-room.

"I'm afraid you'll get wet," said Tom ruefully.

"Oh, never mind; my pony's head will be turned homewards, and we shall bowl along at a good rate."

"But you have no coat."

"No," said Miss Dennis, and went off to accomplish other necessary reforms in the teacher's house. When she had finished the rain was pouring down heavily.

"Couldn't you stop somewhere in the township all night?" Tom asked, as he regretfully watched her putting on her hat.

She shook her head. "There is a fire burning in your bedroom. You will go to bed at once, won't you?"

"Thank you, I will," he said very quietly.

Miss Dennis wondered if he thought her too interfering.

"I couldn't let you go from this room into a cold one," she said apologetically.

"I don't know how to thank you enough. You will have to put on my overcoat. I *think* it is hanging in the far corner."

"From what I know of your methods, I should expect to find it in the wood box."

"I am proud that you credit me with having any method at all. Isn't the thing hanging there?"

"Y—es; but I do not think that I shall need it," she said doubtfully. But as she spoke she remembered her mother's warning words, "My dear, take care of your chest; think of your poor father."

"It's awfully shabby, I know," Tom began.

"It isn't that," Miss Dennis said slowly. "I am wondering how I should get it back to you quickly, for you will need it."

"Send it down by one of the school children."

"And have all Edenburn and Naranilla on the *qui vive!*" she exclaimed, with a short, nervous laugh. Then she wished that she had not spoken.

Tom half raised himself on his elbow and looked into her face.

"Would you mind if they were?" he asked.

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"Yes."

"I didn't think you were that sort of girl," he said, sinking back with a disappointed air.

"I am the sort of girl who, being a public servant, has no right to lay herself open to criticism in her private capacity. And it has been to-night—well, a little irregular, you know."

"It's been awfully jolly."

"Irregular things frequently are."

"You'll have to take the overcoat, and don't bother about returning it in a hurry."

She was ready at last, buttoned up to the throat in Tom's stout inverness, her white silk handkerchief tied around her neck, and a bundle of magazines under her arm.

"I'll bring these back in a week," she said.

"But I sha'n't have the influenza then," Tom answered, with a rueful countenance, "and then you won't stop to tea."

"No, certainly not," she said, smiling.

Then she departed, and Tom was again left to his own reflections. But now they were altogether pleasant. He no longer regarded life as a burden, but rather desired a speedy recovery, that he might further his acquaintance with the Naranilla teacher.

Miss Dennis drove home in the rain feeling decidedly damp, but conscious of an elation which rarely accompanied her acts of kindness.

Before she went to bed she hung the dripping overcoat before the kitchen fire. When she awoke late the next morning, she heard her little cousin Myra, who stayed with her for company, entertaining someone in the kitchen. She dressed hurriedly and went out. It was Mrs. Southern, one of the most accomplished gossips of Naranilla.

"Well, now," the visitor said meaningly, pointing her forefinger at Tom's inverness, "who'd have thought of seein' that in your kitchen! Mr. Heathwell's, too, as sure as I'm Jane Southern!"

Miss Dennis concluded that direct honesty was the best course.

"I called at Mr. Heathwell's last night for some books which he had promised to lend me, and the rain coming on unexpectedly, I was glad to accept the offer of his overcoat. I am wondering how I can send it back to him quickly."

"Well, now, how lucky! I'm goin' down to my married daughter's for the day, and Mrs. Pinfold's goin' to be there after chapel. She'll have her spring cart, and can take it on quite easy. Any message?"

Miss Dennis accepted her fate with outward cheerfulness. The coat was wrapped up rather insecurely in an old newspaper, the strongest covering which the teacher's modest dwelling furnished at that moment, and Mrs. Southern set off with it, feeling that the day had commenced propitiously.

When Mr. Heathwell's attack of influenza passed off he took an early opportunity of calling upon Miss Dennis and thanking her for her kindly ministrations. This visit was the precursor of many others, and Tom, being a cautious and withal clever young man, so arranged them that even the keenest intellects in the two townships should have little or no evidence from which to draw their intelligent inferences.

He knew that the incident of the overcoat had entered every cottage, with various adornments and enlargements, but he determined that the interest should not be augmented by anything further on his part. It was six months after their impromptu tea that Miss Dennis became "Nell" to Mr. Tom Heathwell. The next morning Tom waylaid Mrs. Pinfold in the street and told her of his engagement. He was enjoying the satisfaction which human nature feels at having sprung a surprise on an interested and sympathetic community.

Mrs. Pinfold made a movement with her left eyelid which with the slightest degeneration would have become a wink. "You don't suppose that's news to us, do you, Mr. Heathwell?" she said placidly. "We've only been waitin'." Then she drew from her pocket a small paper parcel, and, removing the wrappings, displayed Nell's little white silk handkerchief. "You don't keep Edenburn and Naranilla in the dark," she continued composedly. "It takes a cleverer man than you to do that, though you do bring the children on somethink wonderful. When Mrs. Southern give me that coat of yours to bring home, and the paper bein' tore off, I see this little kerchief stickin' out of the pocket, I says to myself, 'She's had that tied round her neck—I can tell that by the creases—and she's put it there unconscious like, and she wouldn't have it go on to him for worlds, and she'd feel oncomfortable if I was to give it back to her.' So I just put it away private till the time come for me to speak of it, and there it is, sir. And Jane Southern can bear me witness that when I see it I says to her, 'Jane,' I says, 'there's a weddin' in that overcoat pocket!'"

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"Kiss, and be friends!"

By A. C. Weatherstone

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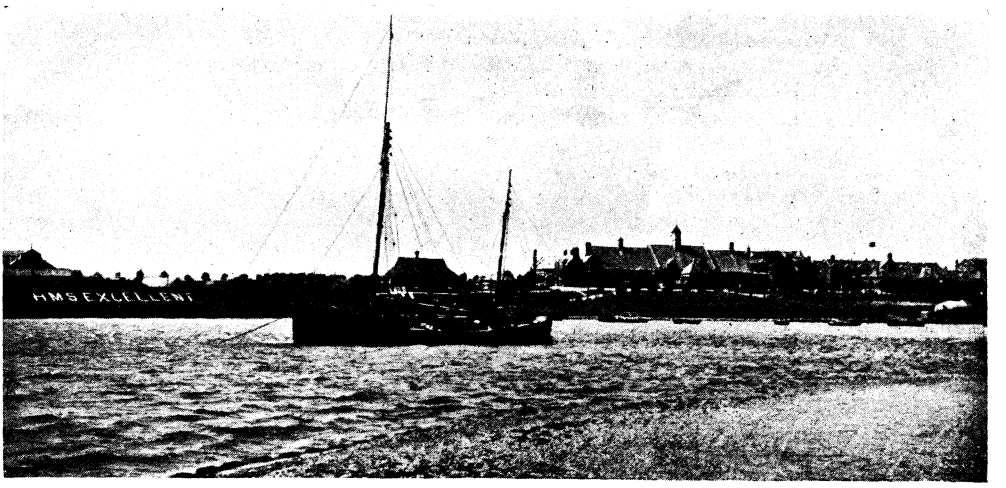

VIEW OF WHALE ISLAND FROM THE WATER.

THE GREATEST NAVAL GUNNERY SCHOOL IN THE WORLD:

A VISIT TO WHALE ISLAND, PORTSMOUTH.

By Archibald S. Hurd.

Illustrated by W. H. Bunnett.

WHAT Shoeburyness is to the Army, Whale Island, in Portsmouth Harbour, is to the British Navy, with this difference, that the Admiralty actually made Whale Island as it is to-day. It is the largest naval gunnery establishment in the world, where all the officers and a large proportion of the seamen gunners of the Navy are trained in the science of guns, large and small. There are two other naval gunnery schools — H.M.S. *Cumbridge* at Devonport, and a shore establishment at Sheerness ; but neither of these schools is as important as that at Portsmouth.

There are many curious points about this island. It supplies an answer to the enigma, When is an island not an island ? From beginning to end the official Navy List may be searched, and no mention will be found of Whale Island, for the reason that officially it is not an island, but one of her Majesty's ships. It is known as H.M.S. *Excellent*, and the lives of the naval officers and men conform in every detail to that which they would lead on a warship. This is one of those euphuisms which are dear to the official mind, and of which the Navy can boast not a few. Tradition enacts that officers and sailors shall be trained in ships, so that they may become accustomed to sea life ; convenience enacts that they shall be trained ashore. When the Admiralty abandon tradition to convenience, they refuse to recognise their heterodoxy, and thus on approaching Whale Island from Portsmouth, the legend "H.M.S. *Excellent*," worked in white flint stones on the greensward bank, convinces one that this so-called island is really a warship. But one's reason totters when one sees that this ship is at low water approached from Portsmouth along a causeway. One is fain to give up the attempt to unravel the many contradictions in terms which surround this island which is not an island.

When war *does* break out, then we shall begin to understand what a very important person is the "man behind the gun"—more important almost than anything or anyone else. It would be an education to most civilians to visit Whale Island, in Portsmouth Harbour, the subject of this article.

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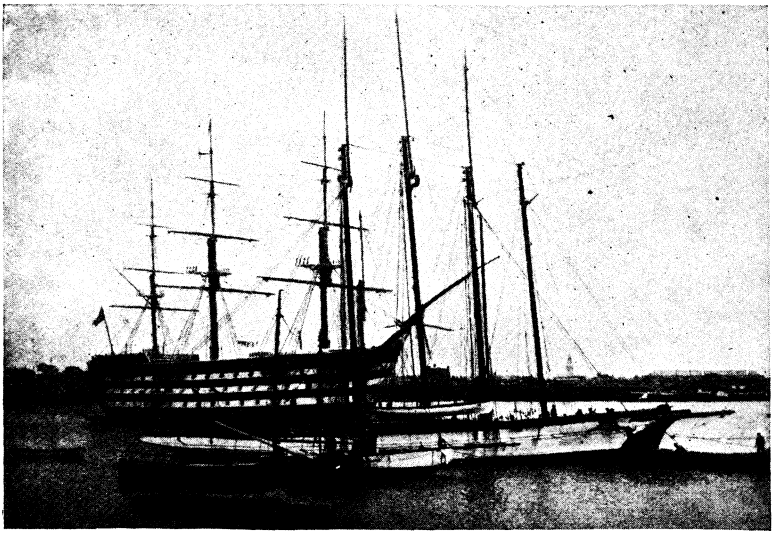
The history of this island supplies an explanation of the circumstances under which it has come to be officially designated a ship. Fifty years ago—for how many hundred years before history does not state—there was a small island in Portsmouth Harbour, under the shadow of Porchester Church, and below the bluff now marked on the maps "Fort Brockhurst." It was quite an insignificant island, showing some resemblance to the shape of a whale; hence its name. As this portion of the harbour was shallow—in fact, at low water a mere stretch of mud with channels here and there—the island did not interfere with the navigation of the Queen's ships, and its existence was ignored. About the middle of the century the expansion of Portsmouth—which was to render it in our time the greatest naval arsenal in the world—was commenced. When the naval authorities had decided that more basins and docks should be dug out, the question arose, What shall be done with all the displaced soil and sludge? A decision of some kind had to be made before the work of developing Portsmouth Dockyard could be proceeded with; so as a temporary measure it was directed that as the armies of convicts dug out the basins and docks, they should deposit the soil on poor despised Whale Island. Soon the original island quite disappeared under the hundreds of tons of mud and clay, and year by year, as the accommodation for her Majesty's ships in the Dockyard was increased, the size of the island grew, until the broad expanse of mud-land suggested to someone that it might eventually be of service. Then a change was made. As further tons of mud were laid round its sides, layers of chalk were deposited, and thus the banks of the island became firm.

In the process of time the existence of this almost circular tract worried the naval authorities, and at last it was decided that the officers and seamen in the gunnery ship *Excellent*, already overcrowded, should carry out some of their drills ashore, and a gunner was told off to act as guardian of the island, which for the first time in its uneventful history began to attract attention. Blue-jackets busied themselves with bricks and mortar, and a house for the use of this gunner rose from the centre of the island, and was promptly nicknamed "The House that Jack Built." By this name it is still remembered. Residents of Portsmouth tell many anecdotes of the kings of Whale Island, as successive guardians were labelled, and of the merry parties that were wont to indulge in the sport of rabbit-hunting at their invitation.



H.M.S. "VICTORY."

Step by step Whale Island developed from a mere exercise ground to be the headquarters of the Gunnery School. It was a great and radical change for the Admiralty to sanction the removal of the school from the *Excellent* to this shore establishment, but the old wooden wall had seen its best days, and was not suited to instructional purposes.

Since 1830, when the 74-gun ship *Excellent*, so intimately associated with the naval exploits of Nelson and Collingwood, was appropriated "for the exercise of the great guns," as an old chronicler tells us, until 1891, officers and seamen learnt their gunnery afloat. When one *Excellent* became too old she was replaced; and when, eight years ago, it was agreed that the gunnery school should be removed to Whale Island, the last of the long line of famous wooden ships which had

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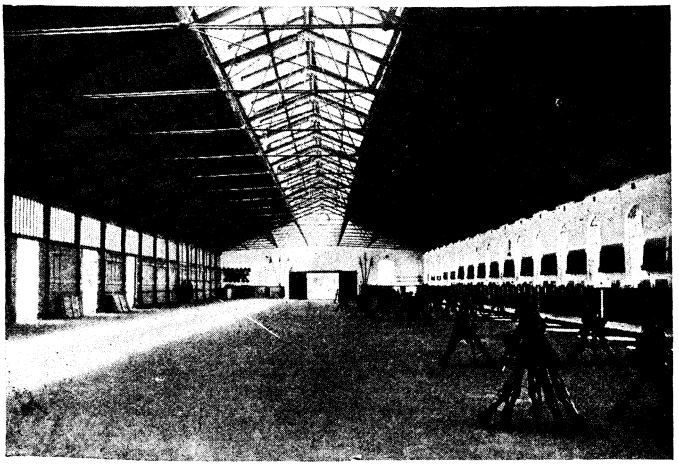
borne the name of *Excellent* was towed away to an alien port to be broken up by her foreign purchasers. It was a ship of note. She was originally known as the *Queen Charlotte*, and on one of the buildings at Whale Island the figure-head is still preserved: it consists of a well carved bust of the consort of George III. In 1816 the *Queen Charlotte*, which was subsequently named the *Excellent*, flew the flag of Lord Exmouth when he bombarded Algiers and obliged the Bey to release over one thousand Christian slaves. Round this old 110-gun ship clung many stirring memories, and not a few regretted that she should pass into the hands of foreign ship-breakers after so many years of splendid service. There was a sentiment about the old wooden walls—now fast diminishing in number—that the steel vessels of to-day, with all their complicated machinery, powerful guns and great speed, can never possess. In place of this grand old three-decker, the name *Excellent* is now borne by a little gunboat, which, with nine other boats of somewhat similar type, is used for firing practice by the officers and men at Whale Island. It is this diminutive gunboat which lends its name to Whale Island.

OFFICERS' QUARTERS AT WHALE ISLAND.

To-day the population of Whale Island comprises about a thousand officers and men, who are housed in a series of buildings which, among Government structures, are probably unequalled in design and construction. They are of red brick, with stone facings, and their excellence gives point to two jokes that are current in the neighbouring naval town. In one case a Royal Engineer officer designed infantry barracks without making any arrangements for a staircase; and the other has to do with the plans of the Gosport barracks. They were being prepared simultaneously with those of some barracks for India. Under the pressure of so much work the Royal Engineers department lost its head, with the result that the low, single-storey buildings which were intended for India were erected at Gosport. It may be said that such a tale is improbable; but there are these barracks—long rows of un-English looking buildings spread out over acres of the ground at Gosport—to justify this digression.



THE GYMNASIUM.

It is only human to enjoy a story of which some Government official is the butt, and this must be an excuse for another tale that hangs on the enigma already mentioned, When is an island not an island? Officers of her Majesty's ships pay no duty on the wines they consume afloat, and when

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the Admiralty laid it down that Whale Island was not an island—although, as we were taught at school, it is "a piece of land entirely surrounded by water"—but was to be regarded as a warship, an interesting discussion arose with the Customs authorities. They lacked all imagination, and, despite the label on the greensward in white flint stones —"H.M.S. *Excellent*"—they persisted in claiming that the officers should pay duty on their wines, as is done at all other shore establishments. Hence it happens that the wines drunk by the officers of H.M.S. *Excellent* are dearer by a considerable sum than those which refresh the inner man of the thousands of officers of ships which plough the main or are lashed to a quay from year's end to year's end, as are the depôt ships in Portsmouth Dockyard.

In spite of the hard-heartedness and want of imagination displayed by the Customs officials, the lives of the officers who reside at Whale Island are quite pleasant. Their quarters occupy the centre of the island, with an unbroken view over the twelve acres of level and well turfed ground which comprises what is euphemistically styled a summer drill-ground, but in reality forms the largest cricket ground in England. There is an apocryphal tale of a merchant officer who cycles on his ship when the sea is smooth; but picture what is officially known as a warship with a cricket ground of twelve acres; tennis courts that can be flooded in winter for skating; a bicycle track, a splendid cinder sweep; a racquet court, quite an imposing building in solitary grandeur; a bowling alley and a pistol gallery; a large gymnasium and a winter drill-ground that is capable of being utilised for recreation. It is astonishing, on investigation, how much—not only at Whale Island, but elsewhere—that is designed for purely practical and instructional purposes can be shaped to recreative ends if an attempt is made. Add to all these attractions an aviary, where doves and golden pheasants bask in the sun, and an officers' billiard-room—a building of almost palatial appearance—and it will be understood that the officers of H.M.S. *Excellent* have many compensations for the "sea life" that they lead, and that there are spheres of national usefulness less to be desired than theirs. Even the Imperial yachts *Standart* and *Hohenzollern* can offer no such attractions to their august travellers; yet in the Navy List H.M.S. *Excellent* is referred to in quite commonplace language as "screw gunboat, 508 tons; indicated horse-power 380 under natural draught." There is nothing there to suggest any pleasure in life, which is an instance of the deceptiveness of official publications.

The seamen undergoing their ninety days' gunnery drills are housed in a series of eight solid and not unpleasant-looking blocks. Each block is named after some admiral, and names that belong, or have belonged, to warships, and are therefore in the naval signal-book, have been chosen where possible; so that, although the men bear the device "H.M.S. *Excellent*" on their caps, they belong really to block Anson, Blake, Collingwood, Drake, Effingham, Frobisher, Grenville or Hawke. Each block consists of four mess-rooms—two on the ground-floor and two above—and in naming these the same happy idea has been carried out. The messes of the Blake block, for instance, are called Britannia, Boscawen, Benbow and Blenheim—a simple and appropriate means of classification. In their essential details each mess-room is very like the lower deck of a warship, except that in place of portholes there are large windows, and the roof, instead of threatening to fall on one's head, is high, and there is thus far more air than sailors are accustomed to 'tween decks. A stove at one end serves for warmth, tables run down the middle for meals, and on either side are the beds of the men, tidily

BLUEJACKETS AT DRILL.

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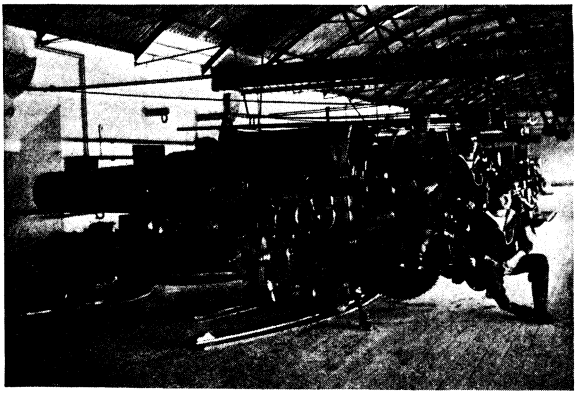
rolled up in the way that every bluejacket learns when he is merely a "cub" on one of the training ships. Maybe the occupants will be all away at drill, or some may have gathered round the fire spinning yarns, while others are mending their clothes as deftly as any seamstress, or are writing letters or reading; but as a rule Jack is not a great reader.

Near these eight blocks of mess-rooms are baths and a laundry and the "ship's galley." Civilians who are familiar with bluejackets as manly fellows, whose sturdy bearing suggests hard fighting and manly attributes, might be amused on entering the laundry to find (as the writer did) two muscular sailors engaged in the homely, domestic task of passing their clothes, which they had just washed, through a mangle, one turning the handle and the other coaxing the clothes between the rollers.

The ship's galley in any big warship is one of the most wonderful arrangements to be seen. One views a great square receptacle not unlike an ordinary domestic scullery boiler, underneath which is a roaring fire; and the cook will state with pride that he prepares so many hundred meals at one time with this huge stove. The galley at Whale Island is large enough to cook the food for 1,200 men. As a matter of fact, it is a daily occurrence to make as many as nine hundred pints of cocoa at one time. Sailors of the Royal Navy are great cocoa-drinkers—not, of course, that they restrict themselves to this beverage.



HEAVY GUN BATTERY.

For their spare hours the men have a large, well-lighted recreation-room. At one end is the canteen, where all—or nearly all—the heart of a bluejacket can desire may be obtained, and in front of it are small tables and chairs. But more interesting is the other end of the room, where the carefully covered floor, an upright piano, and a notice board, "Dancers are requested not to wear their shoes," reveals the secret that Jack cannot be happy if he is not permitted to dance. At night a pianist visits the island from Portsmouth, and men in their stockings only may be seen, either alone or in couples, stepping it gaily on the well-polished floor as only sailors can. Above this hall is another with billiard and bagatelle tables, and plenty of papers and magazines to while away what in the Navy is known as a "Spell, oh!"

But neither eating nor drinking, cricket, tennis, racquets, bicycling nor billiards are the purposes for which Whale Island is intended. It is a hive of activity during many hours of each day. The sub-lieutenants from the Naval College at Portsmouth visit the island to go through a course of gunnery lasting nine weeks, and every seaman of good character belonging to a Portsmouth ship, who aspires to the rating of S.G. (seaman gunner), which carries with it an increase of pay, is permitted to spend ninety days at Whale Island. A man who is industrious will easily qualify in this time, and if he obtains a first-class certificate he will be permitted to go to the Torpedo School for three months, with the object of gaining the additional qualification, S.G.T. (seaman gunner and torpedo man), with a further augmentation of pay.

It is often stated that the Fleet is not sufficiently manned, and that the Admiralty should recruit more men. Such criticism shows that civilians do not yet understand that no man is worth the food he eats on a warship, or the space he occupies, little though it is, who is not a thoroughly up-to-date modern naval seaman, and that an efficient naval seaman is not trained in a month, or even a year. The Lords of the Admiralty might say to-morrow that they will increase the *personnel* of the Navy by 10,000 men, and they would have no difficulty in getting more boys to train than they would want. But it is one thing to "enter" 10,000 boys, it is another thing to turn them into naval scientists—experts in navigation, gunnery, torpedoes, ammunition, explosives, electricity, hydraulics and all the other lore which is the equipment of an

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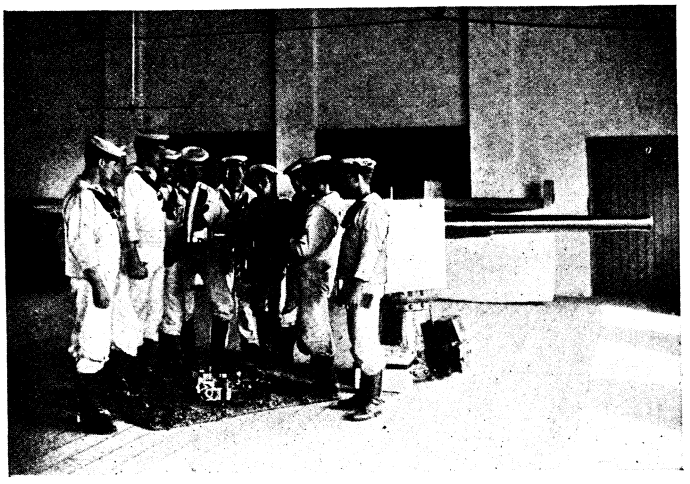
efficient man-of-warsman in these days, when every warship is a box of complicated machinery instead of a modified washtub.



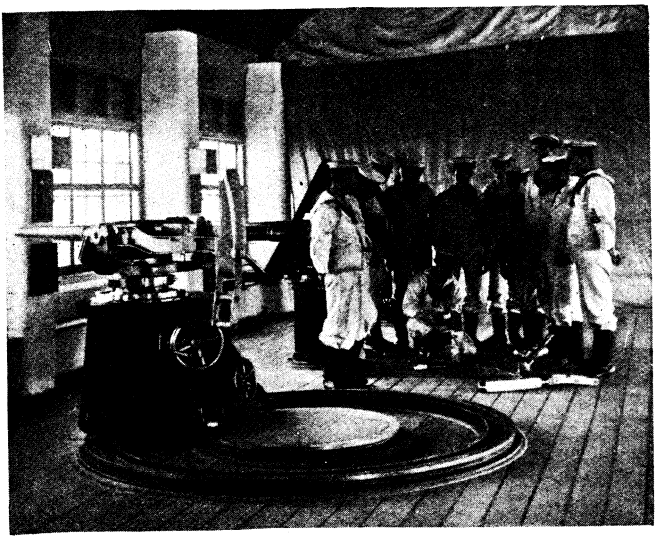
CLASS OF INSTRUCTION DEALING WITH A QUICK-FIRING GUN.

It takes about five years to turn a raw lad of fifteen or sixteen into a fully qualified naval seaman. The instruction that bluejackets receive on Whale Island embraces only a fraction of the knowledge they have to assimilate, and thorough as is the gunnery course in its attention to detail, it makes far less demands on the men's intelligence and application than the longer and purely scientific torpedo course.

All that may be seen at Whale Island is convincing testimony, on the other hand, that the gunnery instruction is no child's play. In the large drill sheds are specimens of almost every gun mounted on her Majesty's ships, from the newest 22-ton breechloading wire-wound guns of the *Powerful* class and the old-fashioned chubby muzzle-loaders, to those devilish machine guns—Gatlings, Gardners, Nordenfeldts and Maxims.

Picture a long, lofty shed, with rows of deadly artillery on either side, in which 800 men are drilled every day in all the mysteries of modern guns; and bear in mind that the 22-ton breechloader, two of which are mounted in each cruiser of the *Aurora* class, is capable of discharging five projectiles weighing 380 lbs. each in six minutes; that the 6-inch quick-firers can send forth seven projectiles weighing 100 lbs. each in a minute; that a Maxim gun, on a button being pressed like the "push" of an ordinary electric bell, will belch forth 670 shot every minute so long as the supply of ammunition is maintained—picture what ingenuity has been enslaved to produce such marvellous results, and that every seaman gunner knows all the ins and outs of these guns, of their ammunition and projectiles and shot, and then some idea will be gained of what kind of man a Jack Tar of to-day must be.

Any day and every day knots of bluejackets may be seen clustered round these guns, learning how to handle them with precision and celerity and ease, or they may be going through instruction in battalion, company, or field-gun drill. Or a party of men may be in the ammunition-room learning all the mysteries of powder, shot and shell, that are a sealed book to civilians, who must stand aghast before the column of powder—standing about eight feet high, with a circumference of not less than four feet—which is required to fire the eighteen hundred pound projectile of a 110-ton breechloading gun.



A CLASS OF ARMOURERS.

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Two such guns are mounted in each of the battleships *Sans Pareil* and *Benbow*, and it costs nearly £200 every time one of them is fired. Everything about the island confirms the belief that every officer and man believes —and believes earnestly—in the motto of this great gunnery school: "*Si vis pacem, para bellum.*" The *esprit de corps* in this "ship" is one of the traditions of the Navy, for the conduct of the men is only equalled by their splendid physique; to tell a gunner that he is a disgrace to the *Excellent* is a withering anathema.

Whale Island is still growing in extent and in national usefulness. Before some further dock extensions at Portsmouth were recently carried out, the island had a circumference of one and a quarter miles, and it has now been considerably extended, and additional accommodation will probably be erected at no very distant date to meet the growing needs of the fast increasing *personnel* of the Fleet. It is also destined to become a centre for testing new armour, as it is already for all the gun mountings in the ships of the Navy. Specially constructed butts for testing armour, with a backing of many yards of sand, have been erected, and in the course of time the old target-ship *Nettle* will be abandoned.

Whale Island has only one drawback—it is near Portsmouth, and lacks sufficient solidity to permit the heavy guns to be fired. The men can learn how to load, how to handle, and how to fire the guns on the island, but for actual gunnery practice they have to go afloat on one of the gunboats which act as tenders to the establishment, and proceed to sea for gun practice. Despite this fact, Whale Island has already justified its existence.

This experiment having proved a success, the Admiralty are about to utilise the adjacent Horsea Island as a torpedo school, and already, as in the case of Whale Island years ago, Jack has built a house there for a resident gunner, who will reign as a constitutional king until such time as the authorities decide to further develop the island and dub it H.M.S. *Vernon*, the name borne by the present torpedo school ship. Ten or twenty years hence there will be two islands in the vicinity of Portsmouth which will be officially known as ships, and, it may be, an admiral will rule over them in place of the Robinson Crusoe gunners of early days.

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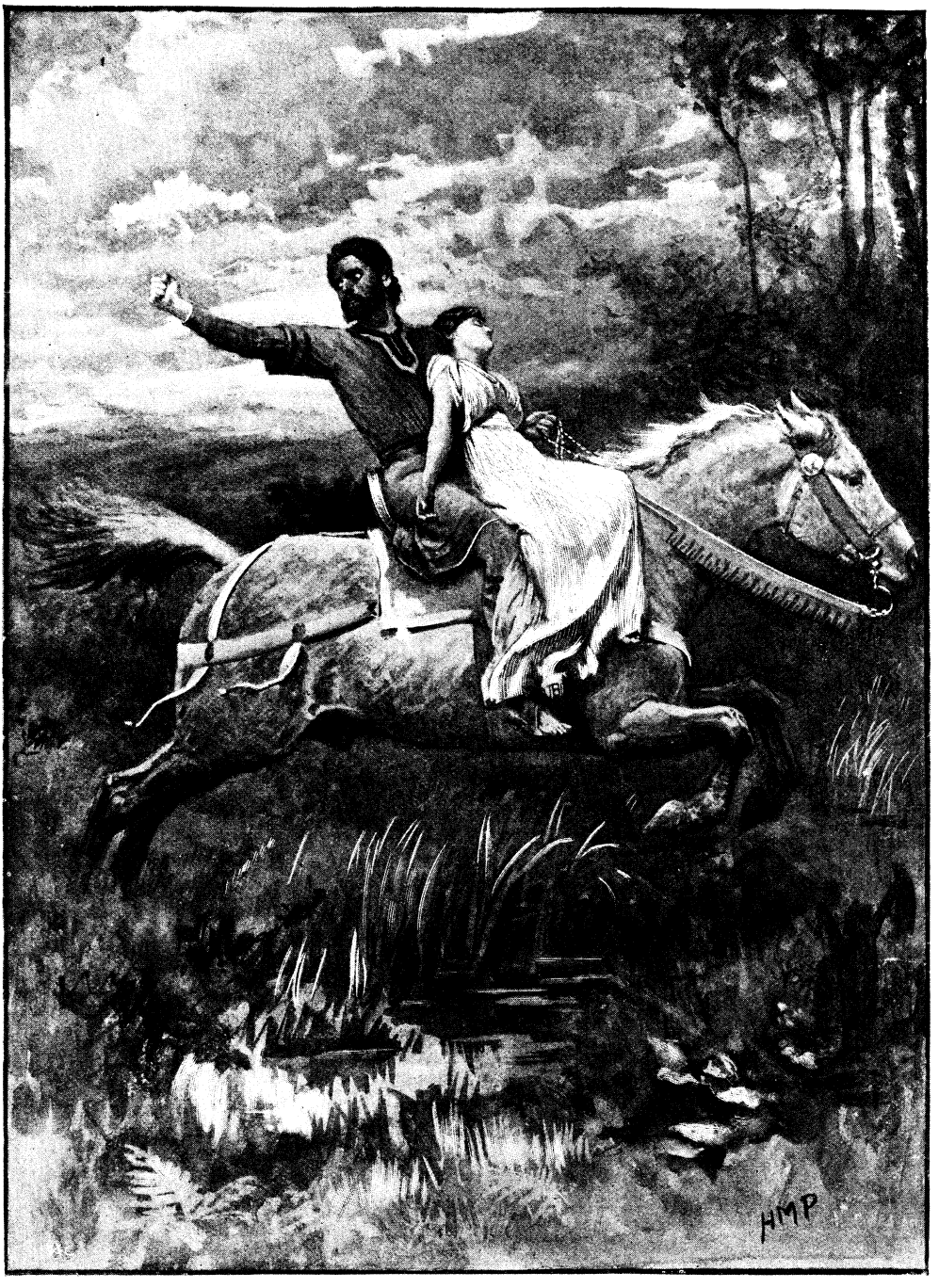

The Rescue.

By H. M. Paget.

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JOAN OF THE SWORD.

By S. R. Crockett.*

Illustrated by Frank Richards.

SYNOPSIS OF FOREGOING CHAPTERS.

In the preceding chapters we are introduced to the Duchess Joan of Hohenstein, in Castle Kernsberg, one of her eight strong castles in the small State over which she rules. Joan, who is twenty-one years old, is a keen and accomplished swordswoman. She is bound by the decree of her father, anxious to unite the two States, either to marry Prince Louis of Courtland or to forfeit her dominion. An ambassador arrives from the neighbouring State of Plassenburg, and his escort is entertained in the castle hall by the men-at-arms, who, in order to add to the evening's excitement, call for a young Danish count, who has recently been taken prisoner, to be brought from his dungeon to make fresh sport for them. At the height of the uproar Joan appears, demanding an explanation. Learning that her chief captain is responsible for the torturing of the prisoner, she insists that he shall fight with the Dane, she being the prisoner's second. After a fine display of swordsmanship, Joan decides that the Dane shall be freed, and takes him into her service. Hearing that Leopold von Dessauer, the Plassenburg Ambassador, is visiting Courtland on leaving Kernsberg, Joan determines to accompany him disguised as his secretary, in order that she may see the Prince unknown to him. They arrive at Courtland during a grand tournament. "Johann Pyrmont," as the secretary is called, is much interested in one particular knight who wins the prize for bravery.

CHAPTER VI.

AN AMBASSADOR'S AMBASSADOR.

After the tournay of the Black Eagle, Leopold von Dessauer had gone to bed early, feeling younger and lighter than he had done for years. Part of his scheme for these northern provinces of his fatherland consisted in gradual substitution of a few strong states for many weak ones. For this reason he smiled when he saw the eyes of his secretary shining like stars.

It would yet more have rejoiced him had he known how uneasy lay that handsome head on its pillow. Aye, even in pain it would have pleasured him. For Von Dessauer was lying awake and thinking of the strange chances which help or mar the lives of men and women, when a sudden sense of shock, a numbness spreading upwards through his limbs, the rising of rheum to his eyes, and a humming in his ears, announced the approach of one of those attacks to which he had been subject ever since he had been wounded in a duel some years before—a duel in which his present Prince and his late master, Karl the Miller's Son, had both been engaged.

The Ambassador called for Jorian in a feeble voice. That light-sleeping soldier immediately answered him. He had stretched himself out, wrapped in a blanket for all covering, on the floor of the antechamber in Dessauer's lodging. In a moment, therefore, he presented himself at the door completely dressed. A shake and a half-checked yawn completed his inexpensive toilet, for Jorian prided himself on not being what he called "a pretty-pretty captainet."

"Your Excellency needs me?" he said, standing at the salute as if it were the morning guard changing at the palace gate.

"Give me my case of medicine," said the old man; "that in the bag of rough Silesian leather. So! I feel my old attack coming upon me. It will be three days before I can stir. Yet must these papers be put in the hands of the Prince early this morning. Ah, there is my little Johann; I was thinking about her—him, I mean. Well, he shall have his chance. This foul easterly wind may yet blow us all good."

He made a wry face as a twinge of pain caught him. It passed and he resumed.

"Go, Jorian," he said, "tap light upon his chamber door. If he chance to be in the deep sleep of youth and health—not yet distempered by thought and love, by old age and the eating of suppers—rap louder, for I must see him forthwith. There is much to order ere at nine o'clock he must adjourn to the summer palace to meet the Prince."

So in a trice Jorian was gone and at the door of the architect-secretary, he of the brown skin and Greekish profile.

Johann Pyrmont was, it appeared, neither in bed nor yet asleep. Instead, he had been standing at the window watching the brighter stars swim up one by one out of the east. The thoughts of the young man were happy thoughts. At last he was in the capital city of the Princes of Courtland. His many days' journey had not been in vain. Almost in the first moment he had seen the noble youthful Prince and his sister, and he was prepared to like them both. Life held more

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than the preparation of plans and the ordering of bricklayers at their tasks. There was in it, strangely enough, a young man with closely cropped head whom Johann had seen storm through the ranks of the fighting men that day, and afterwards receive the guerdon of the bravest.

Though what difference these things made to an architect of Hamburg town it was difficult (on the face of things) to perceive. Nevertheless, he stood and watched the east. It was five of a clear autumnal morning, and a light chill breath blew from the point at which some hours after the sun would rise.

A pale moon in her last quarter was tossed high among the stars, as if upborne upon the ebbing tide of night. Translucent greyness filled the wide plain of Courtland, and in the scattered farms about the lights, which signified early horse-tending and the milking of kine, were already beginning to outrival the waning stars. Orion, with his guardian four set wide about him, tingled against the face of the east, and the electric lamp of Sirius burnt blue above the horizon. The lightness and the hope of breathing morn, the scent of fields half reaped, the cool salt wind from off the sea, filled the channels of the youth's life. It was good to be alive, thought Johann Pyrmont, architect of Hamburg, or otherwise.

Jorian rapped low, with more reverence than is common from captains to secretaries of legations. The young man was leaning out of the window and did not hear. The ex-man-at-arms rapped louder. At the sound Johann Pyrmont clapped his hand to the hip where his sword should have been.

"Who is there?" he asked, turning about with keen alertness, and in a voice which seemed at once sweeter and more commanding than even the most imperious master-builder would naturally use to his underlings.

"I—Jorian! His Excellency is taken suddenly ill and bade me come for you."

Immediately the secretary opened the door, and in a few seconds stood at the old man's bedside.

Here they talked low to each other, the young man with his hand laid tenderly on the forehead of his elder. Only their last words concern us at present.

"This will serve to begin my business and to finish yours. Thereafter the sooner you return to Kernsberg the better. Remember, the moon cannot long be lost out of the sky without causing remark."

The young man took the Ambassador's papers and went out. Dessauer took a composing draught and lay back with a sigh.

"It is humbling," he said to Jorian, "that to compose young wits you must do it through the heart, but in the case of the old through the stomach."

"'Tis a strange draught he hath gotten," said the soldier, indicating the door by which the secretary had gone forth. "If I be not mistaken, much water shall flow under bridge ere *his* sickness be cured."

As soon as he had reached his own chamber Johann laid the papers upon the table without glancing at them. He went again to the window and looked across the city. During his brief absence the stars had thinned out. Even the moon was now no brighter than so much grey ash. But the east had grown red and burned a glorious arch of cool brightness, with all its cloud edges teased loosely into wisps and flakes of changeful fire. The wind began to blow more largely and statedly before the coming of the sun. Johann drew a long breath and opened wide both halves of the casement.

"To-day I shall see the Prince!" he said.

It was exactly nine of the clock when he set out for the palace. He was attired in the plain black dress of a secretary, with only the narrowest corded edge and collar of rough scrolled gold. The slimness of his waist was filled in so well that he looked no more than a well-grown, clean-limbed stripling of twenty. A plain sword in a scabbard of black leather was belted to his side, and he carried his papers in his hand sealed with seals and wrapped carefully about with silken ties. Yet, for all this simplicity, the eyes of Johann Pyrmont were so full of light, and his beauty of face so surprising, that all turned to look after him as he went by with free carriage and a swing to his gait.

Even the market girls ran together to gaze after the young stranger. Maids of higher degree called sharply to each other and crowded the balconies to look down upon him. But through the busy morning tumult of the streets Johann Pyrmont walked serene and unconscious. Was not he going to the summer palace to see the Prince?

At the great door of the outer pavilion he intimated his desire to the officer in charge of the guard.

"Which Prince?" said the officer curtly.

"Why," answered the secretary, with a glad heart, "there is but one—he who won the prize yesterday at the tilting!"

"God's truth!—And you say true," ejaculated the guardsman, starting; "but who are

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you who dares blurt out on the steps of the palace of Courtland that which ordinary men —aye, even good soldiers—durst scarcely think in their own hearts ?"

"I am secretary of the noble Ambassador of Plassenburg, and I come to see the Prince !"

"You are a limber slip to be so outspoken," said the man ; "but remember that you would be right easily broken on the wheel. So have a care of those slender limbs of yours. Keep them for the maids of your Plassenburg !"

And with the freedom of a soldier he put his hand about the neck of Johann Pyrmont, laying it upon his far shoulder with the easy familiarity of an elder, who has it in his power to do a kindness to a younger. Instinctively Johann slipped aside his shoulder, and the officer's hand, after hanging a moment suspended in the air, fell to his side. The Courtlander laughed aloud.

"What !" he cried, "is my young cock of Plassenburg so mightily particular that he cannot have an honest soldier's hand upon his shoulder ?"

"I am not accustomed," said Johann Pyrmont, with dignity, "to have men's hands upon my shoulder. It is not our custom !"

The soldier laughed a huge, earth-shaking laugh of merriment.

"Faith !" he cried, "you are early begun, my lad, that men's hands are so debarred. 'Not our custom !' says he. Why, I warrant, by the fashion of your countenance, that the hands of ladies are not so unwelcome. Ha ! you blush ! Here, Paul Strelitz, come hither and see a young gallant that blushes at a word, and owns that he is more at home with ladies than with rough soldiers."

"In the plain black dress of a secretary."

A great bearded Bor-Russian came out of the guard-room, stretching himself and yawning like one whose night has been irregular.

"What's ado ?—what is't, that you fret a man in his beauty-sleep ?" he said. "Oh, this young gentleman ! Yes, I saw him yesterday, and the Princess Margaret saw

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him yesterday, too. Does he go to visit her so early this morning? He loses no time, i' faith! But he had better keep out of the way of the Wasp, if the Princess give him many of those glances of hers, half over her shoulder—you know the kind, Otto."

At this the first officer reiterated his jest about his hand on Johann's shoulder, being of that mighty faction which cannot originate the smallest joke without immediately wearing it to the bone.

The secretary began to be angry. His temper was not long at the longest. He had not thought of having to submit to this when he became a secretary.

"I am quite willing, sir captain," he said, with haughty reserve, "that your hand should be—where it ought to be—on your sword handle. For in that case my hand will also be on mine, and very much at your service. But in my country such liberties are not taken between strangers!"

"What?" cried Otto the guardsman, "do men not embrace each other when they meet, and kiss each other on either cheek at parting? How then, so mighty particular about hands on shoulders? Answer me that, my young secretary."

"For me," said Johann, instantly losing his head in the hotness of his indignation, "I would have you know that I only kiss ladies, or permit them to kiss me!"

The Courtlander and the Bor-Russian roared unanimously.

"Is he not precious beyond words, this youngling, eh, Paul Strelitz?" cried the first. "I would we had him at our table of mess. What would our commander say to that? How he would gobble and glower! 'As for me, I only kiss ladies!' Can you imagine it, Paul?"

But just then there came a clatter of horse's hoofs across the wide spaces of the palace front, into which the bright forenoon sun was now beating, and a lady of tall figure and a head all a-ripple with sunny golden curls dashed up at a canter, the stones spraying forward and outward as she reined her horse sharply with her hands low.

"The Princess Margaret!" said the first officer. "Stand to it, Paul. Be a man, secretary, and hold your tongue."

The two officers saluted stiffly, and the lady looked about for someone to help her to descend. She observed Johann standing, still haughtily indignant, by the gate.

"Come hither!" she said, beckoning with her finger.

"Give me your hand!" she commanded.

The secretary gave it awkwardly, and the Princess plumped rather sharply to the ground.

"What! Do they not teach you how to help ladies to alight in Plassenburg?" queried the Princess. "You accompany the new ambassador, do you not?"

"You are the first I ever helped in my life," said Johann simply. "Mostly——"

"What! I am the first? You jest. It is not possible. There are many ladies in Plassenburg, and I doubt not they have noted and distinguished a youth like you."

The secretary shook his head.

"Not so," he said, smiling; "I have never been remarked by any lady in Plassenburg in my life."

The Courtlander, standing stiff at the salute, turned his head the least fraction of an inch towards Paul Strelitz the Bor-Russian.

"He sticks to it. Lord! I wish that I could lie like that! I would make my fortune in a trice," he muttered. "'As for me, I only kiss ladies!' Did you hear him, Paul?"

"I hear him. He lies like an archbishop—a divine liar," muttered the Bor-Russian under his breath.

"Well, at any rate," said the Princess, never taking her eyes off the young man's face, "you will be good enough to escort me to the Prince's room."

"I am going there myself," said the secretary curtly.

"Certainly they do not teach you to say pretty things to ladies," answered the Princess. "I know many that could have bettered that speech without stressing themselves. Yet, after all, I know not but I like your way best!" she added, after a pause, again smiling upon him.

As she took the young man's arm, a cavalier suddenly dashed up on a smoking horse, which had evidently been ridden to his limit. He was of middle size, of a figure exceedingly elegant, and dressed in the highest fashion. He wore a suit of black velvet with yellow points and narrow braiding also of yellow, a broad golden sash girt his waist, and his face was handsome, his mustachios long, fierce, and curling. His eye glittered like that of a snake, with a steady, chill sheen, unpleasant to linger upon. He swung from his horse, casting the reins to the nearest soldier, who happened to be our Courtland officer Otto, and sprang up the steps after the Princess and her young escort.

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"Gazed after the pair till the door swung to."

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"Princess," he said hastily, "Princess Margaret, I beg your pardon most humbly that I have been so unfortunate as to be late in my attendance upon you. The Prince sent for me at the critical moment, and I was bound to obey. May I now have the honour of conducting you to the summer parlour?"

The Princess turned carelessly, or rather, to tell it exactly, she turned her head a little back over her shoulder with a beautiful gesture peculiar to herself.

"I thank you," she said coldly, "I have already requested this gentleman to escort me. I shall not need you, Prince Ivan."

And she went in, bending graciously and even confidentially towards the secretary, on whose arm her hand reposed.

The cavalier in banded yellow stood a moment with an expression on his face at once humorous and malevolent.

He gazed after the pair till the door swung to and they disappeared. Then he turned bitterly towards the nearest officer.

"Tell me," he said, "who is that lout in black, who looks like a priest-cub out for a holiday?"

"He is the secretary of the embassy of Plassenburg," said Otto the guardsman, restraining a desire to put his information in another form. He did not love this imperious cavalier; he was a Courtlander and holding a Muscovite's horse. The conjunction brought something into his throat.

"Ha," said the young man in black and yellow, still gazing at the closed door, "I think I shall go into the rose-garden; I may have something further to say to the most honourable the secretary of the embassy of Plassenburg!" And summoning the officer with a curt monosyllable to bring his horse, he mounted and rode off.

"I wonder he did not give me a silver groat," said the Courtlander. "The secretary sparrow may be dainty and kiss only ladies, but this Prince of Muscovy has not pretty manners. I hope he does not marry the Princess."

"Not with her goodwill, I warrant," said Paul Strelitz; "either you or I would have a better chance, unless the Prince Ludwig compel her to it for the good of the State!"

"Prince Wasp seemed somewhat disturbed in his mind," said the Courtlander, chuckling. "I wish I were on guard in the rose-garden to see the meeting of Master Prettyman and His Royal Highness the Hornet of Muscovy!"

CHAPTER VII.

H.R.H. THE PRINCESS IMPETUOSITY.

THE Princess Margaret spoke low and confidentially to the secretary of embassy as they paced along. Johann Pyrmont felt exceedingly awkward. For one thing, the pressure of the Princess's hand upon his arm distracted him. He longed to have her on the other side.

"You are noble?" she said, with a look down at him.

"Of course!" said the secretary quickly. The opposite had never occurred to him. He had not considered the pedigree of travelling merchants.

The Princess thought that it was not at all of course, but continued—

"I understand—you would learn diplomacy under a man so wise as the High Councillor von Dessauer. I have heard of such sacrifices. My brother, who is very learned, went to Italy, and they say (though he only laughs when I ask him) worked with his hands in one of the places where they print the new sort of books instead of writing them. Is it not wonderful?"

"And he is so brave," said the secretary, whose interest suddenly increased; "he won the tournament yesterday, did he not? I saw you give him the crown of bay. I had not thought so brave a man could be learned also."

"Oh, my brother has all the perfections, yet thinks more of every shaveling monk and unfledged chorister than of himself. I will introduce you to him now. I am a pet of his. You will love him, too—when you know him, that is!"

"Devoutly do I hope so!" said the secretary under his breath.

But the Princess heard him.

"Of course you will," she said gaily; "I love him, therefore so will you!"

"An agreeable princess—I shall get on well with her!" thought Johann Pyrmont. Then the attention of his companion flagged and she was silent and distrait for a little, as they paced through courts and colonnades which to the secretary seemed interminable. The Princess silently indicated the way by a pressure upon his arm which was almost more than friendly.

"We walk well together," she said presently, rousing herself from her reverie.

"Yes," answered the secretary, who was thinking that it was a long way to the summer parlour, where he was to meet the Prince.

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"I fear," said the Princess Margaret quaintly, "that you are often in the habit of walking with ladies! Your step agrees so well with mine!"

"I never walk with any others," the secretary answered without thought.

"What?" cried the Princess, quickly taking away her hand, "and you swore to me even now that you never helped a lady from her horse in your life!"

It was an *impasse*, and the secretary, recalled to himself, blushed deeply.

"I see so few ladies," he stammered, in a tremor lest he should have betrayed himself. "I live in the country—only my maid——"

"Heaven's own sunshine!" cried the Princess. "Have the pretty young men of Plassenburg maids and tirewomen? Small wonder that so few of them ever visit us! No wonder you stay in that happy country!"

The secretary recovered his presence of mind rapidly.

"I mean," he explained, "the old woman Bette, my nurse, who, though now I am grown up, comes every night to see that I have all I want and to fold my clothes. I have no other women about me."

"You are sure that Bette, who comes for your clothes and to see that you have all you want, is old?" persisted the Princess, keeping her eyes sharply upon her companion.

"She is so old that I never remember her to have been any younger," replied the secretary, with an air of engaging candour.

"I believe you," cried the outspoken Princess; "no one can lie with such eyes. Strange that I should have liked you from the first. Stranger that in an hour I should tell you so. Your arm!"

The secretary immediately put his hand within the arm of the Princess Margaret, who turned upon him instantly in great astonishment.

"Is that also a Plassenburg custom?" she said sharply. "Was it old Bette who taught you thus to take a lady's arm? It is otherwise thought of in ignorant Courtland!"

The young man blushed and looked down.

"I am sorry," he said; "it is a common fashion with us. I crave your pardon if in aught I have offended."

The Princess Margaret looked quizzically at her companion.

"I' faith," she said, "I have ever had a curiosity about foreign customs. This one I find not amiss. Do it again!"

And with her own princessly hand she took Johann's slender brown fingers and placed them upon her arm.

"These are fitter for the pen than for the sword!" she said, a saying which pleased the owner of them but little.

The Courtlander Otto, who had been on guard at the gate, had meantime been relieved, and now followed the pair through the corridors to the summer palace upon an errand which he had invented.

At this point he stood astonished.

"I would that Prince Wasp were here. We should see his sting. He is indeed a marvel, this fellow of Plassenburg. Glad am I that he does not know little Lenchen up in the Kaiser Platz. No one of us would have a maid to his name, if this gamester abode in Courtland and made the running in this style!"

The Princess and her squire now went out into the open air. For she had led him by devious ways almost round the entire square of the palace buildings. They passed into a thick avenue of acacias and yews, through the arcades of which they walked silently.

For the Princess was content, and the secretary afraid of making any more mistakes. So he let the foreign custom go at what it might be worth, knowing that if he tried to better it, ten to one a worse thing might befall.

"I have changed my mind," said the Princess, suddenly stopping and turning upon her companion; "I shall not introduce you to my brother. If you come from the Ambassador, you must have matters of importance to speak of. I will rest me here in an arbour and come in later. Then, if you are good, you shall perhaps be permitted to reconduct me to the palace, and as we go, teach me any other pleasant foreign customs!"

The secretary bowed, but kept his eyes on the ground.

"You do not say that you are glad," cried the Princess, coming impulsively a step nearer. "I tell you there is not one youth ——but no matter. I see that it is your innocence, and I am not sure that I do not like you the better for it."

Behind an evergreen, Otto the Courtlander nearly discovered himself at this declaration.

"His innocence—magnificent Karl the Great! His Plassenburger's innocence—God wot! He will not die of it, but he may be the death of me. Oh, for the opinion of Prince Wasp of Muscovy upon such innocence!"

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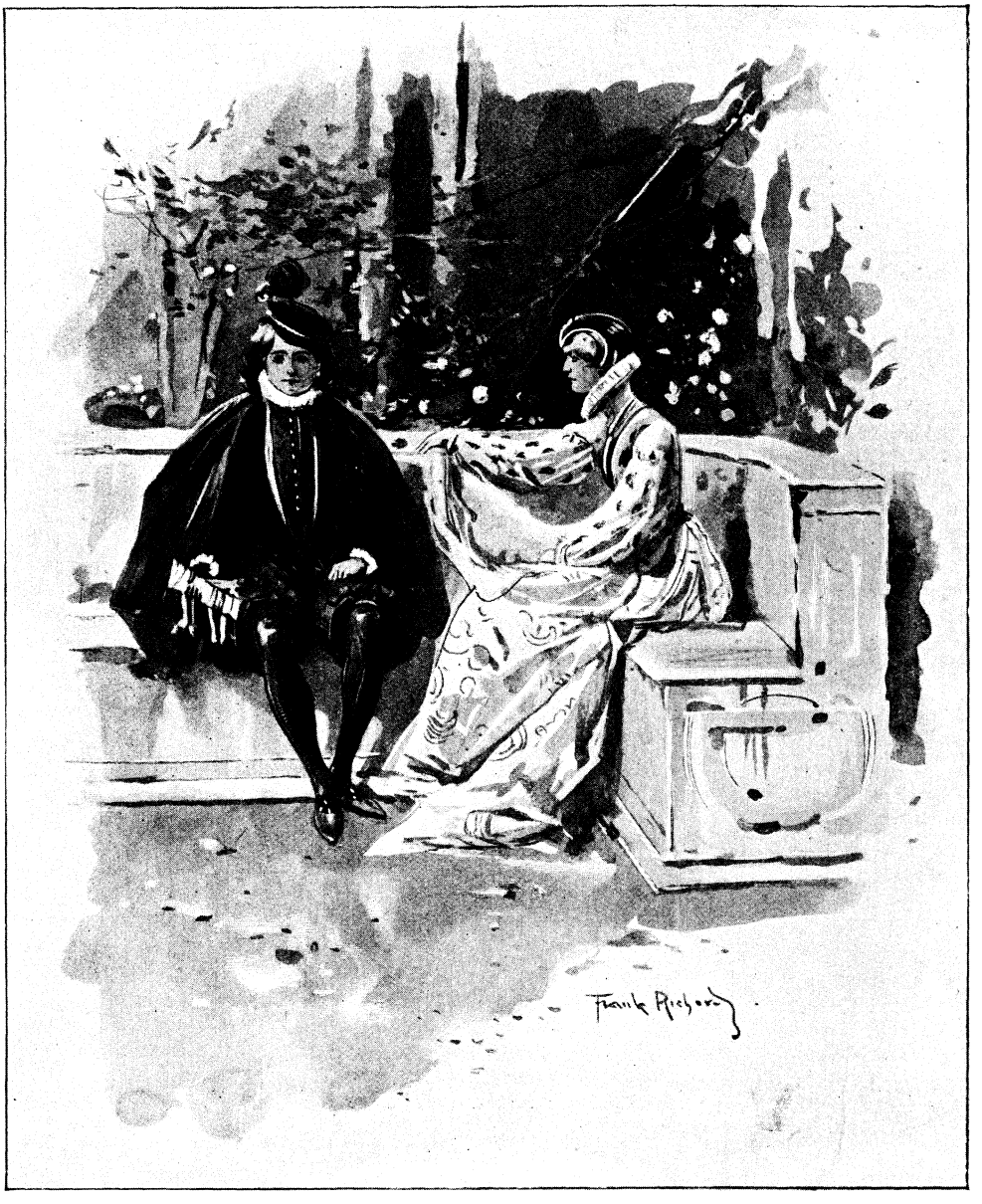

THE PRINCESS AND THE SECRETARY IN THE GARDEN.

"Come," said the Princess, holding out her hands, "bid me good-bye as you do in your country. There is the Prince my brother's horse at the door. You must hasten, or he will be gone ere you do your message."

At this the heart of the youth gave a great leap.

"The Prince!" he cried, "he will be gone!" and would have bolted off without a word.

"Never mind the Prince—think of me," commanded the Princess, stamping her foot. "Give me your hand. I am not accustomed to ask twice. Bid me good-bye."

With his eyes on the white charger by the door the secretary hastily took the Princess by both hands. Then, with his mind still upon the departing Prince, he drew her impulsively towards him, kissed her swiftly upon both cheeks, and finished by imprinting his lips heartily upon her mouth!

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Then, still with his swift impulse and an ardent glance upward at the palace front, he ran in the direction of the steps of the summer palace.

The Princess Margaret stood rooted to the ground. A flush of shame, anger, or some other violent emotion rose to her brow and stayed there.

Then she called to mind the straightforward, unclouded eyes, the clear innocence of the youth's brow, and the smile came back to her lips.

"After all, it is doubtless only his foreign custom," she mused. Then, after a pause, "I like foreign customs," she added, "they are interesting to learn!"

Behind his tree the Courtlander stood gasping with astonishment, as well he might.

"God never made such a fellow," he said to himself. "Well might he say he never kissed any but ladies. Such abilities were lost upon mere men. An hour's acquaintance—nay, less—and he hath kissed the Princess Margaret upon the mouth. And she, instead of shrieking and calling the guard to have the insulter thrust into the darkest dungeon, falls to musing and smiling. A devil of a secretary this! Of a certainty I must have little Lenchen out of town!"

CHAPTER VIII.

JOHANN IN THE SUMMER PALACE.

At the door of the summer palace not a soul was on guard. A great quiet surrounded it. The secretary could hear the gentle lapping of the river over the parapet, for the little pavilion had been erected overhanging the water, and the leaves of the linden-trees rustled above. These last were still clamorous with the hum of bees, whose busy wings gave forth a sort of dull, booming roar, comparable only to the distant noise of breakers when a roller curls slowly over and runs league-long down the sandy beach.

It was with a beating heart Johann Pyrmont knocked.

"Enter!" said a voice within, with startling suddenness.

And opening the door and grasping his papers, the secretary suddenly found himself in the presence of the hero of the tournament.

The Prince was standing by a desk covered with books and papers. In his hand he held a long quill, wherewith he had been writing in a great book which lay on a shelf at his elbow. For a moment the secretary could not reconcile this monkish occupation with his idea of the gallant white-plumed knight whom he had seen flash athwart the lists, driving a clean furrow through the hostile ranks with his single spear.

But he remembered his sister's description, and looked at him with the reverence of the time for one to whom all knowledge was open.

"You have business with me, young sir?" said the Prince courteously, turning upon the youth a regard full of dignity and condescension. The knees of Johann Pyrmont trembled. For a full moment his tongue refused its office.

"I come," he said at last, "to convey these documents to the noble Prince of Courtland and Wilna." He gained courage as he spoke, for he had carefully rehearsed this speech to Dessauer. "I am acting as secretary to the Ambassador—in lieu of a better. These are the proposals concerning alliance between the realms proposed by our late master, the Prince Karl, before his death, and now, it is hoped, to be ratified and carried out between Courtland and Plassenburg under his successors, the Princess Helene and her husband."

The tall, fair-haired Prince listened carefully. His luminous and steady eyes seemed to pierce through every disguise and to read the truth in the heart of the young architect-secretary. He took the papers from the hand of Johann Pyrmont, and laid them on a desk beside him, without, however, breaking the seals.

"I will gladly take charge of such proposals. They do as much credit, I doubt not, to the sagacity of the late Prince, your great master, as to the kindliness and good-feeling of your present noble rulers. But where is the Ambassador? I had hoped to see High Councillor von Dessauer for my own sake, as well as because of the ancient kindliness and correspondence that there was between him and my brother."

"His brother," thought the secretary. "I did not know he had a brother—a lad, I suppose, in whom Dessauer had an interest. He is ever considerate to the young!" But aloud he answered, "I grieve to tell you, my lord, that the High Councillor von Dessauer is not able to leave his bed this morning. He caught a chill yesterday, either riding hither or at the tourney, and it hath induced an old trouble which no leech has hitherto been skilful enough entirely to heal. He will, I fear, be kept close in his room for several days."

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"I also am grieved," said the Prince, with grave regret, seeing the youth's agitation, and liking him for it. "I am glad he keeps the art to make himself so beloved. It is one as useful as unusual in a diplomatist!"

Then with a quick change of subject habitual to the man, he said, "How found you your way hither? The corridors are both confusing and intricate, and the guards ordinarily somewhat exacting."

The tall youth smiled.

"I was in the best hands," he said. "Your sister, the Princess Margaret, was good enough to direct me, being on her way to her own apartment."

"Ah!" muttered the Prince, smiling as if he knew his sister, "this is the way to the Princess's apartment, is it? The Moscow road to Rome, I wot!"

He said no more, but stood regarding the youth, whose blushes came and went as he stood irresolute before him.

"A modest lad," said the Prince to himself; "this ingenuousness is particularly charming in a secretary of legation. I must see more of him."

Suddenly a thought crossed his mind.

"Why, did I not hear that you came to us by way of Kernsberg?" he said.

The blushes ceased and a certain pallor showed under the tan, which overspread the young man's face as the Prince continued to gaze fixedly at him. He could only bow in assent.

"Then, doubtless, you would see the Duchess Joan?" he continued. "Is she very beautiful? They say so."

"I do not think so. I never thought about it at all!" answered the secretary. Suddenly he found himself plunged into deep waters, just as he had seen the port of safety before him.

The Prince laughed, throwing back his head a little.

"That is surely a strange story to bring here to Courtland," he said, "whither the lady is to come as a bride ere long! Especially strange to tell to me, who——"

"I ask your pardon," said Johann Pyrmont; "your Highness must bear with me. I have never done an errand of such moment before, having mostly spent my life among soldiers and (he was on his guard now) in a fortress. For diplomacy and word-play I have no skill—no, nor any liking!"

"You have chosen your trade strangely, then," smiled the Prince, "to proclaim such tastes. Wherefore are you not a soldier?"

"I am! I am!" cried Johann eagerly; "at least, as much as it is allowed to one of my—of my strength to be."

"Can you fence?" asked the Prince, "or play with the broad blade?"

"I can do both!"

"Then," continued his inquisitor, "you must surely have tried yourself against the Duchess Joan. They say she has wonderful skill. Joan of the Sword Hand, I have heard her called. You have often fenced with her?"

"No," said the secretary, truthfully, "I have never fenced with the Duchess Joan."

"So," said the Prince, evidently in considerable surprise; "then you have certainly often seen her fence?"

"I have never seen the Duchess fence, but I have often seen others fence with her."

"You practise casuistry, surely," cried the Prince. "I do not quite follow the distinction."

But, nevertheless, the secretary knew that the difference existed. He would have given all the proceeds and emoluments of his office to escape at this moment, but the eye of the Prince was too steady.

"I doubt not, young sir," he continued, "that you were one of the great army of admirers which, they say, continually surrounds the Duchess of Hohenstein!"

"Indeed, you are in great error, my lord," said Johann Pyrmont, with great earnestness and obvious sincerity; "I never said one single word of love to the Lady Joan—no, nor to any other woman!"

"No," said a new voice from the doorway, that of the Princess Margaret, "but doubtless you took great pleasure in teaching them foreign customs. And I am persuaded you did it well, too!"

The Prince left his desk for the first time and came smilingly towards his sister. As he stooped to kiss her hand, Johann observed that his hair seemed already to be thin upon the top of his head.

"He is young to be growing bald," he said to himself; "but, after all" (with a sigh), "that does not matter in a man so noble of mien and in every way so great a prince."

The impulsive Princess Margaret scarcely permitted her hand to be kissed. She threw her arms warmly about her brother's neck, and then as quickly releasing him, turned to the secretary, who stood deferentially looking out at the window, that he might not observe the meeting of brother and sister.

"I told you he was my favourite brother, and that you would love him, too," she said. "You must leave your dull Plassen-

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burg and come to Courtland. I, the Princess, ask you. Do you promise?"

"I think I shall come again to Courtland," answered the secretary very gravely.

"This young man knows the Duchess Joan of Hohenstein," said the Prince, still smiling quietly; "but I do not think he admires her very greatly—an opinion he had better keep to himself if he would have a quiet life of it in Courtland!"

"Indeed," said the Princess brusquely. "I wonder not at it. I hear she is a forward minx, and at any rate she shall never rule it over me. I will run away with a dog-whipper first."

"Your husband would have occasion for the exercise of his art, sister mine!" said the Prince. "But, indeed, you must not begin by misliking the poor young maid that will be so far from home."

"Oh," cried the Princess, laughing outright, "I mislike her not a whit. But there is no reason in the world why, because you are all ready to fall down and worship, this young man or any other should be compelled to do likewise."

And right princess-like she looked as she pouted her proud little lips and with her foot patted the polished oak.

"But," she went on again to her brother, "your poor beast out there hath almost fretted himself into ribands by this time. If you have done with this noble youth, I have a fancy to hear him tell of the countries wherein he has sojourned. And, in addition, I have promised to show him the carp in the ponds. You have given him a great enough dose of diplomatics and canon law by this time. You have, it seems to me, spent half the day in each other's society."

"On the contrary," returned the Prince, smiling again, but going towards the desk to put away the papers which Dessauer's secretary had brought—"on the contrary, we talked almost solely about women—a subject not uncommon when man meets man."

"But somewhat out of keeping with the dignity of your calling, my brother!" said the Princess pointedly.

"And wherefore?" he said, turning quickly with the papers still in his hand. "If

"'You have business with me?' said the Prince."

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to guide, to advise, to rule, are of my profession, surely women, who are the more important half of the human race, cannot be foreign to my calling!"

"Come," she said, hearing the word without attending to the sense, "I also like things foreign. The noble secretary has promised to teach me some more of them!"

The tolerant Prince laughed. He was evidently accustomed to his sister's whims, and, knowing how perfectly harmless they were, he never interfered with them.

"A good day to you," he said to the young man, by way of dismissal. "If I do not see you again before you leave, you must promise me to come back to the wedding of the Duchess Johanna. In that event you must do me the honour to be my guest on that occasion."

The red flooded back to Johann's cheek.

"I thank you," he said, bowing; "I will come back to the wedding of the Duchess Joan."

"And you promise to be my guest? I insist upon it," continued the kindly Prince, willing to gratify his sister, who was smiling approval, "I insist that you shall let me be your host."

"I hope to be your guest, most noble Prince," said the secretary, looking up at him quickly as he went through the door.

It was a singular look. For a moment it checked and astonished the Prince so much that he stood still on the threshold.

"Where have I seen a look like that before?" he mused, as he cast his memory back into the past without success. "Surely never on any man's face before."

Which, after all, was likely enough.

But putting the matter aside as curious, but of no consequence, the Prince rode away towards that part of the city from which the towers of the minster loomed up. A couple of priests bowed low before him as he passed, and the people standing still to watch his broad shoulders and erect carriage, said, one to the other, "Alas! alas! the truest Prince of them all—to be thus thrown away!"

And these were the words which the secretary heard from a couple of guards who stood at the gate of the rose-garden, as they, too, stood looking after the Prince.

"Wait," said Johann Pyrmont to himself; "wait, I will yet show them whether he is thrown away or not."

(*To be continued.*)

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A Daughter of Eve.

By H. J. Walker.

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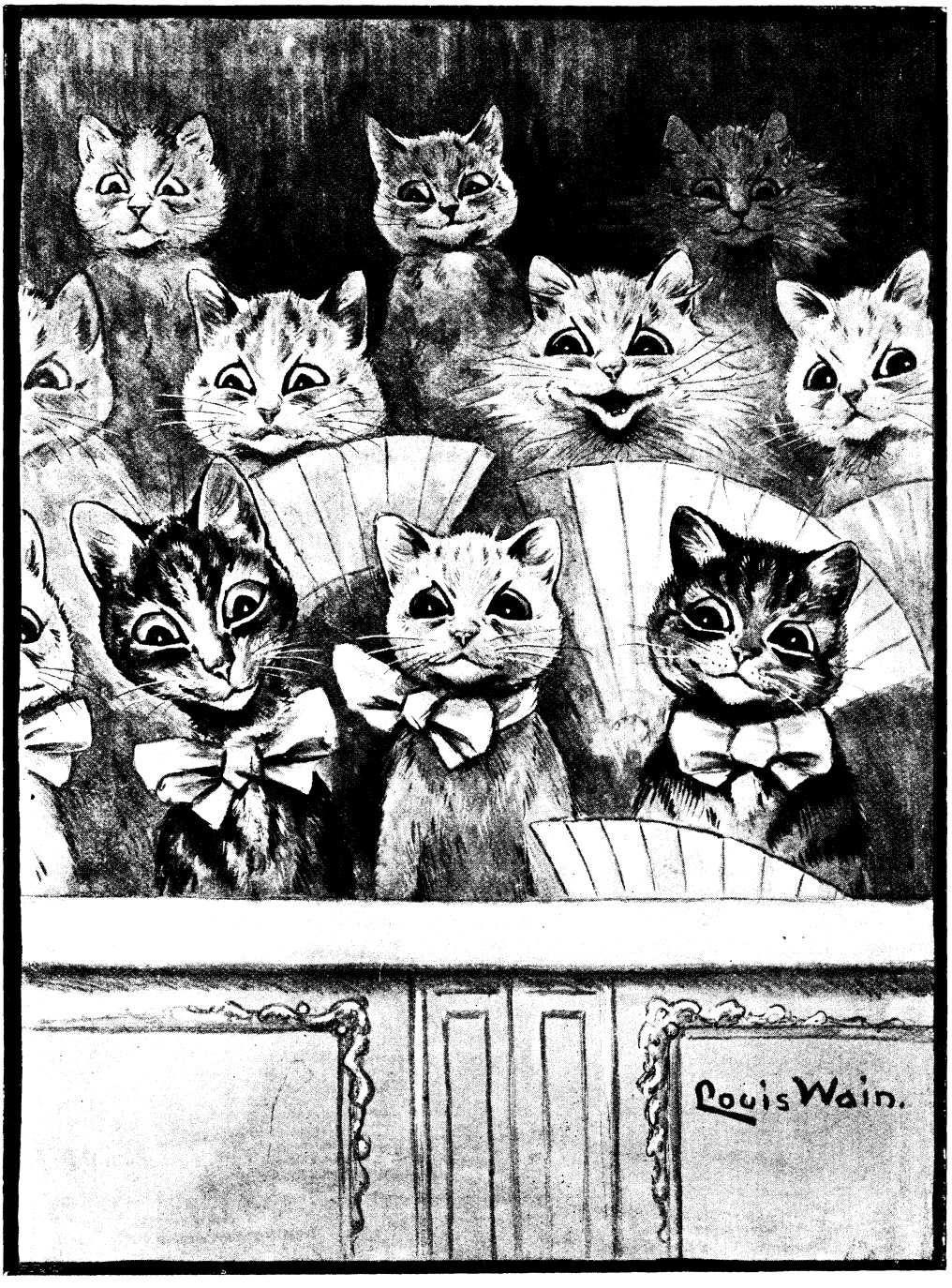

At the Pantomime.

By Louis Wain.

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WELSH PASSING LUTYENS IN THE HOME STRAIGHT FOR THE MILE.

ATHLETIC CHAMPIONS OF 1898.

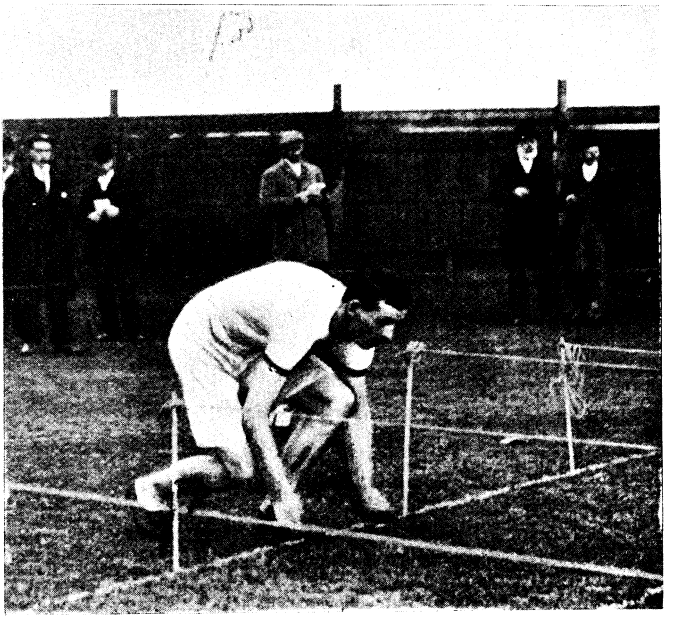
By Fred W. Ward.

Illustrated from Photographs.

THE old order of things has changed for the new in athletics as in other pursuits. During the past three years the champions, like a pack of cards, have been shuffled and shuffled again until we are met by well-nigh fresh faces on every side.

This, however, has been to the advantage of the men themselves, if not to the coffers of the Amateur Athletic Association. When we had such men as Bredin, Bacon, Crossland, Sid Thomas, C. A. Bradley, and others I might mention, running at the Stamford Bridge grounds, we were fairly certain they would win the various events for which they had entered. The public, keen followers of contemporary form, were also fairly well satisfied upon that point; but they did not care. They wanted to see the men run—they anticipated good times, if nothing else—so they passed the turnstiles in their thousands.

Now, despite times made in practice spins by the new comers, there is a glorious uncertainty attached to the greater races of the year. The youngsters, if I may use that term, are apt to lose their heads, and, in consequence, the most fancied candidate may go to the wall. As an instance in point, I may mention the running of the South African representative in last year's quarter mile. Mr. Blignaut should have won easily. Instead of that, he started at such a pace that he ran himself to a standstill before he entered the straight.



F. W. COOPER, THE HUNDRED YARDS CHAMPION, AWAITING THE PISTOL SHOT.

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But to resume. The champions of 1894 and 1895 had effected so many fine performances that their names upon a programme were a certain draw. This, indeed, became so glaring that a wholesale disqualification by the A. A. A. became necessary. From that we have never recovered, despite all statements to the contrary. Our champions of to-day do not possess the drawing power of their predecessors, although in many cases they are equally as good upon the cinder path or over the hurdles.

Take, for instance, young Hugh Welsh, the lad who earned the proud distinction of setting up a fresh Scotch time for the mile, and who carried off the championship at Stamford Bridge before he was twenty years of age. The record of 4 mins. 17 secs. set up by Bacon still stands at the time of writing, but Hugh Welsh, when fit and well, will beat it. He only failed in July to accomplish the feat by one-fifth of a second. Had he known, when the bell rang, how near he was, I am confident he would have set up something closely approaching the time credited to America.

W. J. STURGESS,
Holder of walking records.
Photo by R. W. Thomas, Cheapside.

Mr. Welsh, as I have already pointed out, is a lad in years. At the time he burst out upon the athletic world he was a member of the Watson College athletic club. All his training was done in his sparetime—he refused to neglect his ordinary duties—while even now, with fresh victories awaiting him, he has refused time after time to take an extra holiday in order to don the running costume.

The young Scotsman has even refused to be made the subject of an interview, and the details of his training have been secured from his personal friends. Still, as a matter of fact, he has very few hard and fast opinions concerning this. He simply eschews anything of an indigestible character from his dietary, and lives his ordinary life. His training spins are done morning and evening, being followed by a brisk rub down with a rough towel.

Welsh, however, is a very deceptive runner. He has a beautifully even stride, while he carries his arms well up, with shoulders and head erect. His sprint at the finish is to be seen before it can be believed; with the greatest ease he gets over the ground at a tremendous pace. Bacon's sprint is a good one when near the tape, but Welsh is capable of giving him seven yards in the last hundred and then breasting the thread first. His time this year was but 4 mins. 17$\frac{1}{5}$ secs., although he won by 16 yards, with 80 yards between second and third.

Mr. F. W. Cooper, the hundred yards champion, is a good man, I am ready to admit, but he is not the equal of C. A. or J. W. Bradley at their best. At the Stamford Bridge meeting it was his steadiness that won him the race, for young Wadsley, all things being equal, is the fastest for this particular distance. In the off season

A. E. RELF,
Half-mile champion.
Photo by Calvert.

W. FITZHERBERT,
Quarter-mile champion.
Photo by Stearn, Cambridge.

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Cooper plays Rugby football. He is a speedy three-quarter—I discovered that personally at the time he was a member of the Newport fifteen—but his offensive work is apt to be interfered with by the care he displays in being collared, and also in the going for his man.

Still, his winter work keeps him fit for the summer, although he does not diet himself in any way. He holds that too much work is inclined to spoil an athlete's powers.

Mr. A. E. Relf, who maintained his right to the title of half-mile champion last year, is a runner far from robust in appearance. He is also possessed of a far from taking stride. Where Bredin or Kilpatrick would stride once the Finchley Harrier would take it in twice or more. And yet with all this he does not tire perceptibly, for he told me he finished fairly fresh in the race at the L.A.C. grounds. Relf may never effect a startling record, he is not exactly that stamp of runner, but he will need to be reckoned with for a long time to come in good company. He has proved a far better man at half a mile than was thought to be the case before he held his own with the Rev. Lutyens; and yet I am inclined to think if the old Blue had come to the post without first having run in the mile he would just have won. Mr. Relf's time was 1 min. 56$\frac{1}{5}$ secs.

Mr. Relf, I may add, does the greater part of his training at home after his ordinary duties have been finished for the day. He does nothing of a special character for a club engagement, but allows himself a little more latitude for the great race of the year.

C. BENNETT,
Four mile champion.
Photo by J. Pottle, Poole.

I think it was generally admitted at the time that Mr. W. Fitzherbert scored a somewhat fortunate win in the quarter-mile. Our visitor from South Africa, Mr. Blignaut, was expected to run a great race. His times at practice had been quite good enough to spell almost certain victory, yet he literally threw his chance away, although he had beaten the ultimate winner's time, 50 secs., very frequently in practice spins.

At the sound of the pistol he jumped off at a tremendous pace. He quickly opened up a big gap between himself and the field, but as he came round into the straight he faltered, staggered, and fell. Fitzherbert after that ran in as he liked, the only other competitor to threaten danger being Mr. J. C. Meredith. The style of the winner is not a pretty one. He has a tremendous stride that carries him along at a great rate, but legs, arms, shoulders, and head are all working as he makes his effort. On the other hand, he is the fortunate possessor of a particularly magnificent sprint, and he never knows what it is to cry—"Hold! enough."

The four mile champion, Mr. C. Bennett, is another member of the Finchley Harriers. Prior to his competing last year, he had been looked upon as a somewhat overrated athlete. The manner in which he disposed of his opponents, however, silenced his critics, his last lap being run in the remarkable time of 59$\frac{2}{5}$ secs., this ranking as a record quarter in the four mile race. Mr. Bennett, I may add, has been almost equally successful over country as upon the track. In 1897 he won the four mile A. A. A. championship at Manchester, while

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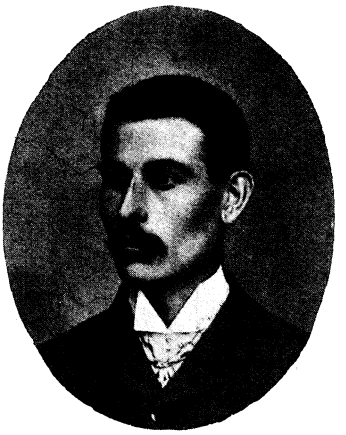
in February of last season he proved successful in the ten mile cross-country championship at Wembley Park. These are but a few of his chief performances; he also won his events when pitted against the French athletes in Paris, while he holds the mile championship of Wilts, Hants, and Dorset, won on September 7. At practice Mr. Bennett confines himself to steady work, as a rule, although there are just a few sharp bursts thrown in occasionally, in order that he may not be "left," should the race be run at only a modest pace. But this is an unlikely contingency with the Finchley man in the field. Mr. Bennett is also a strong handicap runner, having scored repeatedly in events of this character, both in London and the provinces.

When Mr. Harry Curtis was walking, he was considered one of the finest of our amateur exponents of the "heel and toe" variety of racing. Suddenly a new man appeared, and the holder of the championship was beaten at the A.A.A. meeting. The new comer was Mr. W. J. Sturgess, a member of that wide-awake club, the Polytechnic.

Not content with securing the title of champion season after season, Mr. Sturgess

P. LEAHY, THE HIGH JUMP CHAMPION, CLEARING THE CROSS-BAR.
From a Photo.

has set up record after record, while there is not a suspicion of unfairness about his style of progression. During the winter months, and also during the greater part of the summer, he may be seen upon his cycle in all parts of London. Now Mr. Sturgess has announced his retirement from the cinder path, and the statement has gone round that he intends blossoming out into a racing cyclist. This may be true. Probably it is; but the two pastimes are so dissimilar that the Polytechnic man's many admirers will watch him anxiously in his new *rôle*.



H. VARDON,
Golf champion.
Photo by Whitehead, Bury.

The present holder of the 120 yards hurdles is not a second Godfrey Shaw, but Mr. H. R. Parkes is yet of a useful class. Had Messrs. W. H. Maundrell or F. W. Cooper turned out for the championship, I should have expected them to have beaten the L.A.C. man. As it was he had the best of matters at the start, and held his advantage to the end. Mr. Parkes clears the obstacles cleanly, but he is not very fast, as his time, 16$\frac{2}{5}$ secs., proves.

A different class of athlete is Mr. G. W. Orton, who, although running under the colours of the New York A.C., is a Canadian born and bred. In the steeplechase there was but one man to be considered. That was the winner. Not only did he clear each of the fences in capital style, but he was also the only one to escape a ducking at the water-jump, while he completed the two miles in 11 mins. 48$\frac{2}{5}$ secs.

He had trained carefully for this event, I was told at the time, while he also possesses the title of Canadian champion for the same class of event. Across the Atlantic I know the obstacles are of a more formidable character than on this side of the water. This fact explains the apparent hesitation displayed by Mr. Orton just at the take-off of every jump.

He had not been accustomed to take any chances, and he had not been in this country long enough to conform to the altered

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conditions. When at home, so I was informed by a friend, he is a steady worker, who believes in plenty of exercise in the early part of the season; but when all surplus flesh has been removed he considers it time to take it easy. His jumps are frequently taken over fixed obstacles, a practice calculated to improve his style, even if it "slows" him occasionally.

Irishmen, curiously enough, have established a monopoly in what are described as field events of late years. In throwing the hammer, putting the shot, the high jump, and the long jump, they are practically invincible.

Mr. Dennis Horgan is their champion putter of the weight. He does not strain himself as he launches the iron globe through the air, but he cannot explain his success and his put of 45 feet. I mentioned it to him after the sports at Stamford Bridge—he simply smiled and shrugged his shoulders. What can you make of a man like that?

Mr. T. F. Kiely has filled the place vacated by Dr. Barry, and is an equally fine performer with the hammer. When at practice he throws within a few inches of his competition distance, but not unfrequently he has beaten his usual throw when engaged in training. He did this during the season, for, although 140 feet 1 inch won the championship, he had well beaten it two days previously. Plenty of sustaining, nourishing food, and not too much hard work, taken only when feeling fit, are his training rules.

A. J. CHERRY,
World's amateur champion, 100 kilometres.
Photo by R. W. Thomas, Cheapside.

H. W. PAYNE.
Photo by R. W. Thomas, Cheapside.

The style of the high jump champion, Mr. P. Leahy, is in marked contrast to that shown by many of our athletes. His spring is taken from almost immediately below the cross-bar, his legs are tucked well beneath him, and he flies over as lightly and as easily as a bird. I should imagine those of our athletes who imagine their contortions in mid-air assist their powers of propulsion might take a leaf out of Mr. Leahy's book with considerable advantage to themselves. The height he cleared, 5 feet 11⅝ inches, has been but a few times beaten, the world's records excepted.

The greatest sensation of the year has been the long jumps registered by Mr. W. J. M. Newburn, another member of the little band of Irish athletes. He is a giant in stature, standing over 6 feet 4 inches in height, and his jump of 23 feet 9⅜ inches

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was made against a strong breeze and when he was feeling none too well after the passage from Dublin. In practice, Mr. Newburn has cleared 24 feet 5 inches, and he is not yet at his best. His duties connected with the Civil Service unfortunately preclude his competing as frequently as is desirable.

Pole jumping, I have heard on all hands, is almost more of a gymnastic feat than an athletic event. Be that as it may, Mr. J. Poole, a member of the Windermere A. C., stands head and shoulders above his opponents in this particular branch. He understands to a nicety when and how to shift his hands and when to drop the pole. Before now I have seen those considered to be experts bring pole and cross-bar clattering to the ground. But this has never happened with our North Country friend, who this season cleared 10 feet 3 inches.

MAJOR YATES,
Winner of Queen's Prize at Bisley.
Photo by A. H. Fry, Brighton.

A large section of the golfing public invariably pin their faith to Harry Vardon; but, despite his recent successes, I should not term him so finished a player as J. H. Taylor when at his best, or so strong a driver as Douglas Rolland. The last named, four years ago, could drive the ball from the tee twenty and thirty yards farther than any other professional, while Taylor, in the years he won the championship, was far and away the best player of the approach shot. But Vardon is a very steady player; he never loses his head, and he is very deadly on the green. And these are qualities of which he has proved the value by his tenure of the championship.

In Chinn, Gascoyne, and Walters I suppose we possess three of the finest cyclist professionals, at various distances, in the world. Chinn was discovered and brought out by Mr. F. J. Osmond, an old champion himself. His *protégé* has justified his selection, and at the present time is about the fastest man in England or upon the Continent at his particular distance. Gascoyne, although inclined to be erratic, is a very powerful rider, while Walters has fairly taken the place rendered vacant by the retirement of J. W. Stocks.

When the selection of our amateur representatives for the world's championships was made public, the greatest astonishment was expressed at the non-inclusion of Mr. H. W. Payne. He had established several records, he had never been defeated in a scratch race for the season, yet he was not one of those selected to uphold the honour of the Old Country at Vienna.

The reason of the selection committee was a curious one. It was that, although Mr. Payne possessed a *right* to ride there, they had not selected him because they considered the distances unsuitable. Well, opinions differ,

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J. A. JARVIS,
Swimming champion,
Photo by J. Ramsden, Leicester.

but a large section of the cycling world would have been glad to see Mr. Payne included.

Mr. Payne resides in Hammersmith, and is a member of the West Roads C.C. The greater portion of his training has been done upon the Putney track. He does not smoke while preparing for a hard season's work. This is in marked contrast to the methods pursued by Chinn and other riders who have raced extensively upon the Continent.

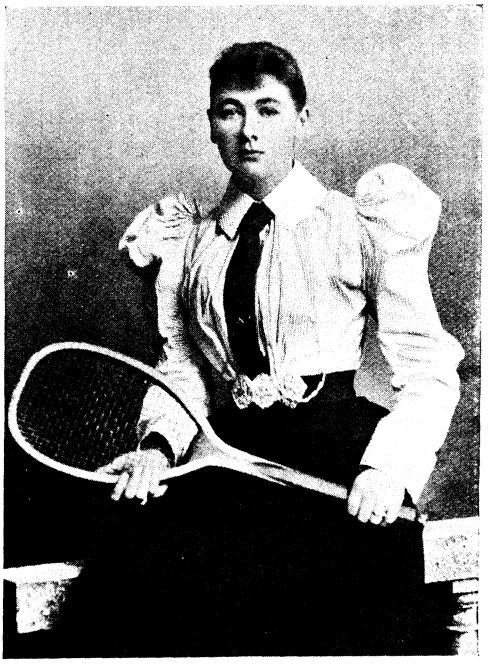
The French and German riders do not stint themselves in the slightest, and their English *confrères* follow their example. Poached eggs, beefsteak, mutton (roast and boiled), light wine, ale, coffee, and cigarettes, these are some of the things they train upon. Black coffee they consider to be one of the best restoratives, and just suitable for their excitable natures. I wonder if this explains why a Frenchman can jump into his sprint so much more rapidly than an Englishman.

The riding of Mr. A. J. Cherry in the world's championships has been a feature of that meeting. Before he left England Mr. Cherry trained specially for his events behind pacemakers, with the satisfactory result that he fairly ran away from his field in the 100 kilometres championship. Mr. Cherry is very regular in living during the racing season. He is engaged at the G.P.O., trains at Wood Green, and generally gets fit just at the time other men are feeling the effects of the hard work they have gone through.

To turn now to another, and possibly a lighter, side of pastime, the lady tennis champion, Miss C. Cooper, claims attention. This young lady has played successfully in all parts of the country. Partnered by Mr. H. S. Mahony, the present Irish tennis champion in the singles, Miss C. Cooper has defeated Mrs. Hillyard and Mr. W. Baddeley in the All England mixed doubles championship.

Last year, or to be exact as regards date, in June, Miss Cooper carried off the singles championship at Wimbledon. As regards her style of play, it was as a volleyer that she first made her mark. Her forehand stroke is in the nature of a forward drive, while her backhand stroke puts a lot of cut upon the ball, bringing it off the ground at a terrific rate. She scores underhand at a very rapid pace, and has a peculiar "lift" of the racket. In doubles she is perhaps the strongest, owing to her proficiency at the net. Still, Miss Cooper has something yet to learn as regards steadiness. Under the stress of competition she is apt to become wild, especially if hard hitting is being indulged in.

Mr. H. S. Mahony, the Irish champion, is one of the prettiest players of the day. His



MISS C. COOPER,
Lady tennis champion.
Photo by R. E. Ruddock, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

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half volleys are perhaps his best strokes, a turn of the wrist imparting a twist to the ball that brings it curling and humming off his racket in a remarkable manner.

One of the pair of famous brothers, Mr. R. F. Doherty, proved the most successful amongst the competitors in June of last year. In the All England singles he won easily, while with Mr. H. L. Doherty he carried off the doubles against Messrs. Nesbitt and Hobart, the latter being defeated by three sets to love, the figures reading 6—4, 6—4, and 6—2.

Without, I trust, too great a stretching of the technical word "athletic," I have included a hero of the rifle in this article. Major Yates, the winner of the Queen's Prize at Bisley, the most envied man of the year, is a non-smoker and a teetotaller. He is a man unblessed with nerves, he shoots with the greatest *sang froid* imaginable. When he was being chaired around the camp after his final shot, he was as cool and collected as though he were at home. His friends and comrades were shouting themselves hoarse in his honour, but he took things quite as a matter of course.

Amongst contemporary swimmers Mr. J. A. Jarvis, of the Leicester S.C., is entitled to a foremost place. He has had this season an almost unbroken series of successes, his easiest win being, perhaps, in the long distance championship from Kew to Putney, while he holds the whole of the titles from ¼ mile up to 5¼ miles. Mr. Jarvis, who has been coached by Mr. C. Newman, of the Westminster Baths, when in strict training consumes a fair amount of beef tea and meat extract, but has no fixed rules concerning his diet.

I suppose it will be generally admitted that the victory of W. A. Barry in the recent sculling championship upon the Thames has done much to advance the cause of professional rowing. The Putney man, who, it will be recollected, formed one of the world's sculling champion crew in America, beat George Lowns and James Wray in very easy style. He is a sculler of the strong, steady order, never knowing when he is beaten, and, although not of the class of Jake Gaudaur, is yet the best of our native oarsmen. After a race, Barry recuperates at Eastbourne, but trains entirely from Putney.

In conclusion, I may add that one of the most important contests of the year was fought out in the tennis courts at Prince's and at Brighton between Peter Latham, of Queen's Club, and Thomas Pettitt, of Boston, U.S.A., the stakes being £1,000 aside, and the title of championship of the world. Latham, who learnt racquets and tennis at Manchester, won with ease, the "railway" service, invented by his opponent, failing to confuse him in the slightest. At the present time he is consequently champion both at tennis and racquets. His opponent, beaten though he was, was not disgraced. He had defeated George Lambert in the championship at Hampton Court as far back as 1885, and then Charles Saunders fell before him at Dublin in 1890. Three years later he resigned the title, crossing the Atlantic last season for the purpose of attempting to secure it again. In this, as I have noted, he failed, but he may console himself with the fact that Latham is far above the level of past champions. When he beat Saunders three and a half years ago at Brighton, Latham had mastered every point in the game—to-day he is even better than then.

A NEW ADMINISTRATION

By

BEATRICE HERON-MAXWELL

Illustrated by

J. BARNARD DAVIS.

"YOU are new from England," said the Chief Citizen in a leisurely manner, "and this is in one sense a brand new Colony; you will need the administrative power of an archangel and the patience of a patriarch. Even then you may have to go under."

"You think so?"

The younger man seemed absorbed in dreamy contemplation of his cigar, but the Chief Citizen was not annoyed at his answer, nor did he construe it to mean either indifference or super-self-confidence.

In spite of an insulated life and an observation of men and things limited to the influx and reflux of a small Colony, with no wider experience of the outside world than the shore has of mid-ocean, the Chief Citizen was a keen judge of character, and accustomed to measure it on broad principles.

"We are in a transition state, you see," he continued. "When a Colony has been the subject of dispute between great Powers for a matter of half a year, it is apt to overestimate its political importance, and a certain amount of judicious snubbing is necessary to reconcile it to taking a back seat. We failed in self-government, but that is no reason why we should appreciate interference. This little international trouble, too, has not helped matters. We are in a condition of vortex, and someone is bound to sink in the swirl."

His listener made a gesture significant of attention.

"When you were first accredited to us by the F. O.," went on the Chief Citizen, assuming the easy, familiar tone of a man about Whitehall, "we smiled. Mr. Roland Masters, fresh from the red-tape strings of his Home Department! We flattered ourselves it would take more than one *attaché* to manage Corva. But I think you have more chance than most, only you are handicapped by being the first and not the third or fourth, and you may have to share the usual fate of forerunners. Still, it is better perhaps to rule in Corva for a month than to hang about a foreign court doing odd jobs for a lifetime."

"I wonder," said Roland Masters, "why I smell violets. Do you grow them here? And is this the season for them?"

The Chief Citizen betrayed no resentment at his irrelevance, nor did he feel uneasy as to the possible waste of his own words. He considered that a mind capable of receiving marked inward and outward impressions at

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the same moment was likely to be well-balanced.

"We don't grow them," he said, "and they would not be in season if we did. You will have to make your garden. The spot that they have chosen for Government House is the least cultivated in the place."

"Nevertheless, I could swear I smell them."

Mr. Roland Masters got up and sauntered towards a clump of flowering shrubs that hid the path beyond.

The Chief Citizen clipped a fresh cigar and eyed him critically. A man well over the middle height, with a slender, well-knit figure, expressive of supple and nervous strength; a well modelled head, brown haired, brown eyed and fair skinned. A face pleasant to look at, a bearing honest and free.

An English gentleman from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, which means an Englishman capable of anything that any other strong man can do, with an additional polish and refinement, due perhaps to heredity, but certainly there.

Meanwhile Roland, who had mentally labelled, docketed and placed on a shelf the Chief Citizen at the beginning of their interview, strolled round the shrubs and stopped short at the vision he encountered. "It is a living poem," he said to himself, "a dream."

Close to him was a garden seat, and on this, in a half reclining attitude, a girl lay asleep. Her white dress fell in gracious folds around her, and her wide, soft hat pillowing her head made an aureole of diaphanous white, framing a mass of dark hair. Dark lashes, close and curled, lay on cheeks like a wild rose for freshness, and the proud and tender curves of parted lips suggested a passion and sweetness of which the promise might well be fulfilled by those veiled eyes. In her hands were clasped some white flowers, newly gathered, and pinned into the lace at her neck a bunch of violets faithfully reproducing Nature's colour and scent. The picture was one of girlish beauty in its perfection, and the undefended slumber added a touch of trustful appeal to it that made it irresistible.

Roland stood absorbed in contemplation, with no desire to break the charmed silence, content to watch and wonder, till a hand touched his shoulder, and the Chief Citizen, with his finger to his lips, beckoned him away. When the shrubs again intervened between them and the trespasser, he said in a level voice—

"Do not disturb her; the Senora is dangerous at all times, but when she sleeps it is best for others to wake."

"Who is she?" asked Roland, with a sort of breathless interest new to himself.

"You will know her well enough soon. She is Miss Eulalia Sinclair, father English, living, mother Spanish, dead. She possesses the prominent attributes of both races to an extreme. She has a good deal to do with Corva, as you will learn in time. If I were you——"

The Senora, for so the popular voice called her, had skirted the shrubs and stood within a few paces of them.

The eyes which Roland had longed to see were turned full upon him, and in their changing depths he read and responded to emotions vivid and disturbing.

She was about to pass them with a slight bow of acknowledgment that included both.

"Present me," said Roland. His tone was imperative, but the note of command did not offend the Chief Citizen; the advent of the feminine element justified it.

"Senora," he said briefly, "you will permit me to make you acquainted with our new administrator, Mr. Roland Masters."

"You find us very disturbed," she said gravely; "we have been so accustomed to our own way that I am afraid we are rather intractable. But we know what is right," breaking into a smile, "even when we don't do it, and sometimes we are sorry. I am penitent at this moment."

"For what?" he asked. He was wondering what the exact colour of her eyes was. Their darkness made it difficult for him to tell.

"For wandering into your garden and falling asleep there."

"For giving me a glimpse of Paradise in a desert?"

"Of Paradise?" Her lips were grave again.

"I have been entertaining angels unawares."

"But, of course, you are a diplomat. We shall have very little chance with you. We are quite uncultivated here—unpolished."

"Rough diamonds?" he queried.

She assented. The thought in his mind was that this was a very unique gem that he had stumbled upon in this uncouth setting.

A girl, lovely, wayward perhaps, but with enough intelligence to prevent her innocence and ingenuousness degenerating into stupidity. This was how he summed her up in his own mind.

They had both forgotten the Chief Citizen,

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and he had not forgotten himself sufficiently to stay where his presence was ignored.

He was already strolling down the desultory road that formed a carriage drive to the British Residency in Corva, and cogitating with an open mind on the probable results of this chance (?) meeting between the two principal people in Corva—the acknowledged representative of Rule, the unacknowledged Queen.

And while he ruminated, the two whom he had left behind were subversing all his calculations, and defying all the landmarks set by ambition and diplomacy.

"You have left all that you care for in England," Eulalia was saying, "or you would not call this lovely place a desert."

"I was speaking by comparison," he answered; "it seemed a desert before, it will seem so again when you are gone."

She smiled scornfully, and her lashes swept over her eyes again as she said—

"You are at least learned in the art of compliment; in Corva we prize sincerity more than politeness."

"Is it impossible to have both—in Corva?" he asked.

She looked away with mock humility.

"It is not for me to teach you what is possible in Corva," she said; "you are expected to know that better than we know it ourselves. Besides, I am only a girl." She threw out both her hands in a little gesture of deprecation.

"Yes, quite a girl," he answered slowly. He was wondering why girls had seemed so tame to him hitherto, for, without being a prig, he was rather a grave and serious-minded young man.

She coloured faintly. Even to her self-possession there was something a little embarrassing in the directness of this stranger's look and speech.

"I must be going home," she said stiffly; "please forgive my intrusion. I forgot this garden belonged to someone else now; I have been accustomed to think of it as my own."

It was on the tip of his tongue to say he hoped she would still think so, but some undefined motive of prudence stopped him. Instead, he suggested that he should order a carriage to take her home.

But she declined, telling him that their plantation adjoined his, and that she loved walking.

"My father," she added, "will of course call on you to-morrow; you have held no official reception yet, I think."

"Your father is——?"

"He is nothing." Her tone was a little brusque. "A patriot has no profession and holds no official rank."

He was amused at the decisive manner, so incongruous with the almost babyish sweetness of her face.

"Is that so?" he asked. "Well, but I thought your father was an Englishman?"

"This is his adopted country," she rejoined, "and we are quite un-English. Good bye."

She was gone without even a hand-shake, leaving him with a vague sensation of repulse. Her last sentence seemed to mark a barrier between them that would not lightly be overstepped. This pretty child was enthusiastic with the quixoticism of youth and inexperience; she probably looked upon him as an interloper, and was prepared to be on the defensive.

Well, if all the Corvans were as shrewd and as captivating as these two whose acquaintance he had just made, life would at least not be devoid of interest.

His thoughts returned to them at intervals while he ate his dinner and smoked his cigar, and again in the morning, during the sudden press of business that accrued with his taking office.

He caught himself wondering what either or both would have said when some vexed question cropped up, though outwardly his demeanour was decisive and untroubled, and one would have thought he had dwelt in Corva all his life, to be able to comprehend matters so easily.

Nevertheless, he did not feel that he was getting on. There was something underlying the surface in every transaction. Also, in all the twists and turns of Corvan political economy, he ran constantly up against one name, a name that seemed a stumbling-block to all peaceful settlement of affairs—Raphael Mentz.

He was apparently the leader of the insurgent party, and the head of a finance committee that had tried to subsidise foreign help and to buy out English control.

The name at last irritated Roland Masters, and he said to his secretary—

"I must see this man; how is he to be got at?"

"Your best way would be through Mr. Sinclair," was the reply; "Mentz is a difficult man to deal with."

"What has Mr. Sinclair to do with him?"

"A good deal, according to report. He could arrange a meeting for you far more easily than you could yourself."

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A note was despatched to Mr. Sinclair, who answered it in person. Roland felt some curiosity to see Eulalia's father, and was conscious of a certain disappointment. Mr. Sinclair was uncompromising, almost insolent in manner, and far from prepossessing in appearance. He refused at first to give any assistance towards the finding of Mentz, and went away after a merely formal visit; but, returning later, he seemed to have thought better of it, and said he would try what could be done.

"He has had time to take advice," said the secretary, with a queer smile.

"You mean he has seen Mentz?" asked Roland.

"No, no! he has seen someone who arbitrates the destinies of Mentz — and others."

Roland wondered who this mysterious person was, but preferred to find out things for himself rather than be taught them. He ended by putting aside business for the day, and going for a long ride over the country. It was a wild, picturesque place, that lent itself to romance and mystery, and encouraged the would-be explorer.

Roland found himself towards evening riding down a *cañon* which narrowed towards its deepest end and terminated in a *cul-de-sac*. He dismounted, therefore, and turning his horse, let it browse on the grass-edged sides while he looked for a cigar.

The sound of murmuring voices reached his ear and he paused to listen. The words were too indistinct to carry any meaning, but with them came a whiff of fragrance that he recognised.

"Violets!" he murmured to himself; "I wonder what she is doing here."

But his search was doomed to failure. The voices ceased, and no further sound betrayed their location; nor could he, even when he climbed the cliffs on both sides, see any trace of neighbours.

It was not till he emerged from the gorge, and was riding slowly home, that he saw, outlined against the sunset sky, two figures on horseback behind him, who, parting at a cross-road, waved a mutual farewell and disappeared. The incident, slight as it was, led him to make a rapid *détour* and to approach his own garden by the road that wound past Mr. Sinclair's house.

"If it is she," he concluded mentally, "she will be returning home, and I must meet her on the way."

He loitered past the gates, gazing up the empty vista of avenue, and was passing on to the corner where he must turn off, when a faint movement in the trees of a high-bank arrested him.

She was there. The clustering leaves hid all but her face and one hand that parted them, but they did not hide the dancing light of mockery in her eyes, the derisive smile that hovered on her lips.

"Good evening," she said; "you are looking for someone?"

"I was looking for you," he answered simply.

"You seem to have ridden far and fast, Mr. Masters. Have you been seeking me all the time?"

"Ever since I left the gorge."

She raised her eyebrows.

"You talk in riddles."

"Not at all. You were there, close to me, yet I could not find you, and afterwards you were ahead of me riding home."

She shook her head. "You credit me with wonderful power," she said. "How could I be here and there as well? You must be confusing me with someone else."

It was an enigma, certainly; he had come straight along the only road that approached her house; she could scarcely have outridden him, yet here she was.

"You must teach me the difference," he said, "and then I shall make no mistakes."

"You would be clever, indeed," she said ironically, "more clever than popular, perhaps, when you reached that faultless stage. *Au revoir*." The branches closed; she had disappeared.

"Miss Eulalia," he pleaded softly.

A swift hand swept aside the leaves.

"I am Miss Sinclair," she said haughtily, "to strangers!"

"At least I may be allowed to say Senora?" he urged. The beautiful eyes flashed and her colour rose.

"Certainly not. That is my name to the people."

"And I am to be an outcast? Miss Sinclair, then, at what hour do you receive callers?"

She hesitated and then said—

"I am seldom at home; you must be kind enough to take your chance." The parley was closed; there was nothing for it but to ride away. As he neared his own portico he became aware that a horseman waited for him, and with a salute he dismounted and led the way to his business-room.

The man who followed him was slightly shorter than himself, and as fair, with an undeniably handsome face, in which dark eyes burnt with a sombre fire that made them

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"'I was looking for you,' he answered simply."

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almost startling against the pallor of a dead white skin.

"I am Raphael Mentz," he said curtly; "you wished to see me."

"I should like a long talk with you," replied Roland, courteously signing to him to sit down.

"I have no time for talk," was the rejoinder. "What I wish to do, I do; but I neither speak of it before nor after. I will listen to anything you may wish to say for a few moments."

It was hardly the greeting that a British envoy, however minor in degree, was accustomed to demand and receive. But Roland wished to get at the heart of things, and this man seemed to him the axle of a wheel.

"I have to say two things," he began; "first, that England does not wish to range itself against Corvans, but to co-operate with them in preserving national peace, and order, and prosperity. Secondly, that I believe you have immense influence with the disaffected here, and that I should be glad of your friendly advice and support."

Mentz's face darkened. The weapon of politeness was one he had not bargained for; it irritated him, for it negatived declarations he had been making to the rioters.

"That is impossible," he said; "you might as well ask an African lion to assist you in whelp-hunting. I will depart from my usual rule and will say two things to you. First, that no Englishman shall domineer in Corva while I have hands and a tongue; second, that I want no patronising offers of friendship. Independence is the motto of every true Corvan, and it is mine."

His manner was overbearing and offensive to the last degree, and he turned on his heel to go. Mr. Roland Masters stepped quietly in between him and the door.

"I retract my offer," he said, "and instead, here is a piece of information for you. The finance committee you organised will be dissolved to-morrow, and the accounts transferred to my jurisdiction. There will be an official proclamation to the rebels, in which your name will now occur, and from this moment the preventive measures will not be half ones."

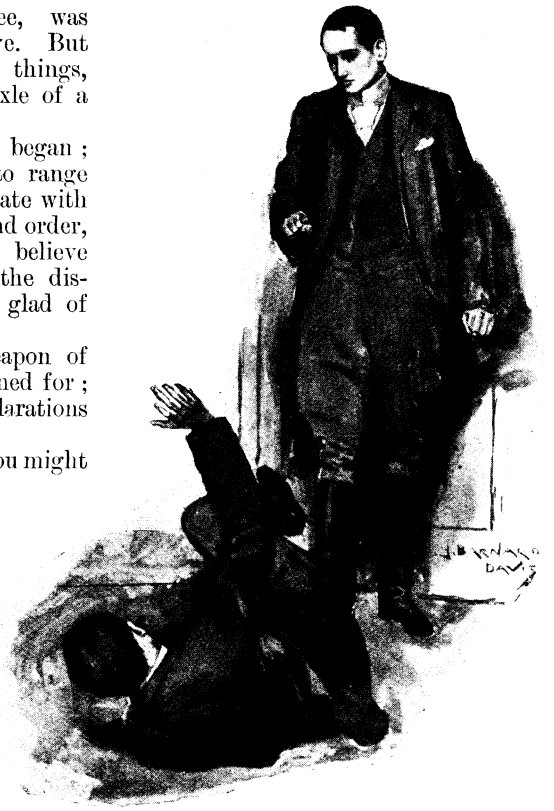
"Take care of yourself." The words, and the glance that accompanied them, were threatening; Raphael Mentz had lost his temper.

Roland surveyed him quietly.

"Stand aside," said Raphael, still more vehemently, "I've had enough of this." He made a rush at Roland, who did not move. The next instant he found himself on the floor. Roland had used skill instead of force.

"You can pick yourself up and go," he said.

They had both been too engrossed to hear the door open, but now they looked at it simultaneously. Eulalia stood there, with a strange smile on her face and a curious flicker of some passionate feeling in her eyes.



"The next instant he found himself on the floor."

"I made my way here unannounced," she said, "because I knew your interview was private, and that you would only pardon intrusion from a woman. I have an urgent message for Mr. Mentz. What was he doing on the floor?"

He had risen while she spoke, and he looked at her now with a gaze in which surprise, anger, humiliation, were at war with each other.

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"I was learning a lesson," he said, with a sort of deadly composure, "that I shall not be likely to forget; and, by God! it is one nobody shall teach me twice. The next time it shall be my turn."

She waited till he had passed her in the doorway and then she turned and said hurriedly to Roland—

"You have begun badly. Raphael never forgives."

"What is he to you, that you bring him messages here?" answered Roland sternly.

She read all that his reproof implied, and an indignant answer sprang to her lips, but she checked it and turned very pale.

"I had a right to interrupt your meeting, because I——"

"Because you arranged it," he put in; "it was he with whom you rode this afternoon."

The anger which Mentz had failed to rouse in him sprang to life at the thought of this companionship.

She looked at him, speechless, though she twice essayed to speak. It seemed as though the motives that urged her to do so, and that held her silent, were both so strong that they fought each other down.

So, without a word, she turned and followed Mentz.

Roland made a step towards the door and stopped. It was best, he reflected, to let them go without rousing anyone's attention. His foot crushed something soft against the polished boards; as he picked it up the subtle fragrance he had learnt to associate with her came from it. It was a violet that had fallen from her dress.

He dropped it into the drawer of his bureau, turned the key, and went away to dinner. Meanwhile Raphael Mentz and Eulalia traversed the garden and plantations till they reached her own domain, when she confronted him.

"You have made a mistake," she said; "this will not advance our interests, it will injure them."

"Since when have you become an advocate for the other side?" he demanded passionately.

"You were a fool," she continued; "you should have won his esteem and confidence; then you could have baffled his projects and freed Corva."

"Is that the plan you are adopting?" he sneered.

She stamped her foot; some of the violets in her dress, already loosened, showered down. He stooped and picked them up, but when she stretched out her hand for them he held them away, though he came close to her.

"You shall have them back on the day I free Corva, not before," he said; "and they will mean that an insult is avenged. You saw me fallen at his feet to-night—you shall see him dead at mine!"

Then he left her.

For the next few days there seemed a sort of hush over Corva, and Roland Masters might have been forgiven if he had thought that the disturbances were quelled and the people resigned to a state of peaceful acquiescence. Still, he did not console himself with any such idea; nor was he reassured by the apparent placidity of Eulalia's manner when occasionally he saw her. He had not allowed his thoughts to dwell on her at all since that evening when he learnt her complicity in the late rebellion. When they met he preserved a distant gravity that surprised and chilled her.

But the violet still lay in his bureau, and the faint sweet scent was a gentle reminder of the loveliest face he had ever seen. There were not wanting people to whisper to him that La Senora was in league with the rebels, and that on the day when Raphael Mentz established a republic in Corva and became president, she would share his triumph.

Her father, he heard, too, was indebted to this man on many scores which were to be paid off by the gift of Eulalia's hand. Ever since her babyhood she had evidently played a distinct part in public affairs, and rumour declared that more than once she had played the spy in person and had given valuable information to her partisans. And of this exploit Roland himself had twice had experience, for on two occasions when he interviewed messengers privately in his sanctum he detected the faint smell of violets that betrayed her hidden presence.

"Either she was there, outside the window, and managed to evade me, or I am under a delusion, and the violet scent is a creation of my brain," he said to himself when, for the second time, this fancy seized him.

At last the crisis came.

The Chief Citizen, who had taken a fatherly interest in Roland from the first, came to him and warned him that a storm was brewing.

"I will give you no names," he said, "because they are my countrymen; but you shall have one clue. Find out where the Senora is, and keep a steady, secret watch on her to-day and to-morrow. In that lies your safety."

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And then, with an impressive farewell savouring of parting benediction, as though their further association in this world were doubtful, the Chief Citizen departed.

Roland was too sensible to despise this advice; he knew that great things hang on trifles, and that a woman often wields a stronger weapon than a host of armed men. He was a little tired of this struggle against the intangible; it gave him a feeling of loneliness to fight the air, and he would have preferred a definite rising of the Corvans, something to cope with and subdue.

He decided to conduct observations himself as far as possible, and by a judicious espionage he ascertained that Eulalia was not at home, and that even her own household did not know her whereabouts.

But how to trace them unaided?

He racked his brain for a solution of this problem, and as soon as his day's work was done he retraced his ride of the evening when he had first discovered her association with Mentz. But this time there was no trace of her in or around the gorge, and he rode home in a disappointment that was all the keener because he would not acknowledge it to himself. Suddenly he became aware that the horizon was suffused with a rosy glow that spread and deepened as he looked at it.

He checked his horse and sat as if turned to stone for an instant, the next he was galloping at full speed straight into the glow. He had realised with a flash of thought what was happening—the rebellion had broken out, and the mutineers had set fire to the Residency.

It took him a quarter of an hour's hard riding to reach the outskirts of his plantation, and here, dismounting, he ran quickly through the trees, emerging at the back of the house, where he hoped to gain an entrance.

The stables and outhouses were in flames, and were being left to burn themselves out, the heat, and glare, and smoke being almost overpowering.

There was no sign of anyone on that side of the house, and the windows and doors were shuttered and blockaded against an invasion.

His servants must have seen the advance of the rebels and taken precautionary measures. He was swinging himself by a creeper to an upper window, when a head looked over the roof and a rifle was brought to bear upon him.

Recognition followed, and they hastened to let him in. He made his way eagerly to the front of the house.

The whole noise and clamour and turmoil of the fight were there; a disorderly crowd, armed and unarmed, swayed on the lawns and drive, at the bottom of which, steadily approaching, were a band of rebels four deep. It was evidently an organised attack, directed against the English generally and himself in particular; he knew whom to thank for it.

His secretary had taken command of the household, and all the available men and arms were assembled in readiness for a siege.

"I will speak to them from the balcony," said Roland.

"It is safer not to," urged the secretary; "they are in the first heat of controversy, and there will be no arguing with them just now. Later, when we get help from the barracks—I have sent a man I can trust there with an urgent message—it will be time to parley."

"When did you send?"

"Ten minutes ago. They ought to be here in half an hour."

It was time, indeed. The rebels, reinforced by the fresh band, had begun the attack, and it was a question only of how many moments the shutters would hold out. The few men that were shot down by Roland's garrison made no appreciable difference; and the commencement of a fusilade seemed to stimulate the onslaught.

The scene was indescribable; half the crowd had no notion why they were there at all, but being there could not possibly get away, so wedged had the mass become; the other half were simply bent on plunder and slaughter as an equivalent demanded from it for a retaining fee.

Here and there a handful of loyal citizens, protesting, had been hustled and trampled into silence, and as Roland looked down on the riotous, clamorous, seething mass, it seemed like a sabbath of anarchy and confusion.

It was at the moment when, with a roar of triumph, the rioters burst one of the lower barricades, and dashed into the house, that a sort of lull occurred in the background, and a man rode through the crowd which closed in his wake like water round a ship.

"Stop!" he shouted; "come back, all of you. Where is Mr. Roland Masters?"

"Here!" The answer, cool and clear, dropped like a pebble, from the balcony, and Roland stood there alone, looking down on Raphael Mentz.

"We have you in our power," said Mentz,

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"but as we are strong we are merciful. Come down to your office, and meet me on equal terms. I will treat with you."

A shout of dissent arose from the listeners, and one fired a shot at Roland, which shattered his right wrist.

The pistol he was holding dropped, but he stooped and raised it in his left hand. A flash of satisfaction gleamed in the eyes of Mentz, though he swore at the man who had fired.

"We are no longer on equal terms, Mr. Masters," he said ironically; "perhaps you would prefer not to come down."

His face was ghastly in its whiteness, and his eyes blazed in it with the ferocity of a wild beast's.

Roland laid the pistol down on the ledge in front of him, and quietly wrapped his handkerchief round his wrist.

"I will come down to the library," he said.

As he made his way through the room and down the corridor, the secretary, going ahead of him, cleared a passage, telling the mixed throng of servants and invaders that Mr. Masters and Mr. Mentz were to meet and negotiate.

A mist swam before Roland's eyes; the injury to his wrist had brought a temporary faintness.

He walked on blindly, resolutely beating it down, and found himself after a moment or two standing in the library with Raphael Mentz stepping in at the window.

Roland knew vaguely that he had told the secretary to leave them and to guard the door from intruders. The room was unbearably hot. It was divided from the stables by only a narrow path, across which the flames had probably stretched.

"'If you stay quite still I will tell you everything.'"

"What do you want?" he said.

"We want unconditional freedom," replied Mentz; "and we intend to give you English more than a warning not to interfere with us again. If you consent to yield as my prisoner, you shall be dealt with according to Corvan law; if you refuse, we will burn the roof over your head, and sack every English house in the place, and deal out to you justice without mercy."

"We are alone, by your own wish," said

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Roland, "and I have only my left hand. Rejoin your men, or I fire."

He raised the pistol and fired as Mentz sprang towards him. At the same instant, with a crash, the wall split open and showers of burning rafter and lath fell into the room. There was a rush of people past the window, a sudden clang and trampling outside, and then a tremendous crash.

A portion of the roof and the whole of one wall had fallen in upon them, impelled by a mass of tumbling, burning masonry from the stable. For an inappreciable space of time Roland had no sensation but one of dizzy heat—the smoke and whirling dust blinded, deafened, stunned him. Then he realised that he was imprisoned in a sort of chaos, his left arm held down by some heavy weight, his other useless one pinioned by Raphael, whose evil face looked into his.

"Do you see these?" Mentz was saying, as he held something close to Roland's eyes; "I swore to give them back to her when you were dead at my feet! She is waiting for them now!"

And with the scent of the flowers came an agonising stab of pain, followed by a feeling of falling—falling through space—a space fraught with such hideous uproar that Roland murmured to himself, "Is this hell?" and wondered whether, if he ever reached heaven, he would find a girl there with a face as fresh as morning, and eyes like wet violets.

* * * * *

"You are here, then?" He thought vaguely that this was heaven, and was conscious of only one thing—the fragrance of Eulalia's flowers.

"Hush!"

"Where am I? and what is this over my face?"

"You are on the sea. In a few moments we shall be clear of Corva, and the bandages shall be removed."

"Am I injured, then?"

"Only your broken wrist and a stab in your left shoulder; your face is not touched."

"Then why——?" In his eagerness, he was attempting to sit up, though weakness hindered him.

"Listen! If you stay quite still I will tell you everything. At the instant that Raphael stabbed you a beam fell on his head; he had meant his knife to reach your heart, and I should have been too late. When I found you I thought you were both dead. The soldiers had not arrived then and the rebels were pillaging the place. I pulled you out from the *débris*, and swathed your head in some strips of my dress. Then I wrapped you in a curtain, and told the men you were Raphael, and that your face was crushed in—as his was—but that Mr. Masters was lying dead in the ruins. Some of them helped me to carry you out to a place of safety, and then transport you to the boat that was waiting for him in case of flight. You must travel as far as the mainland under his name—then you are safe."

"But the rebels! What has happened? I cannot leave Corva to her fate."

"It is all right. The soldiers came at last and made a clean sweep of them. The thing is at an end. I do not think there will be another rebellion in Corva."

"But you? You wished them to succeed—you were to marry Raphael?"

"Never," she said, in a low, vehement voice; "I had learnt to hate him—since you came. I was foolish, misguided; but I saw my folly and tried to stop the rising. He attributed my change to your influence and he had me kidnapped and carried away to a hidden cleft in the gorge—the place where you guessed my presence that day, and from which I rode home by a short cut that you were ignorant of. I was wild with terror and remorse, but I could not escape, till the Chief Citizen found out my hiding place and released me. He hastened to warn the soldiers of the revolt, and I ran the whole way to your house. My father——" her voice faltered—she was weeping. Roland felt for her hand; the soft fingers yielded to his.

"Tell me," he whispered.

"He is dead, too. He was the man who fired at you."

"Then you have no one to return to, Eulalia?"

"No one."

"Sweetheart, will you go back with me? I seem to have made a muddle of it in Corva till now, but I must get back there at once, and set things right, if possible. Will you help me? I should be lost there without you. With your influence I may succeed better."

She was silent.

"Eulalia, I have loved you from the first moment you played eavesdropper in the garden, and your violets betrayed you."

"The Chief Citizen warned you against me."

"He was quite right. He is always right. He foresaw my surrender. Tell me one more thing. I know it already; but I want to hear it from your lips. Did you ever care for Mentz?"

"I have never cared for anyone in my life—until you came. Can you forgive?"

"I have forgiven."

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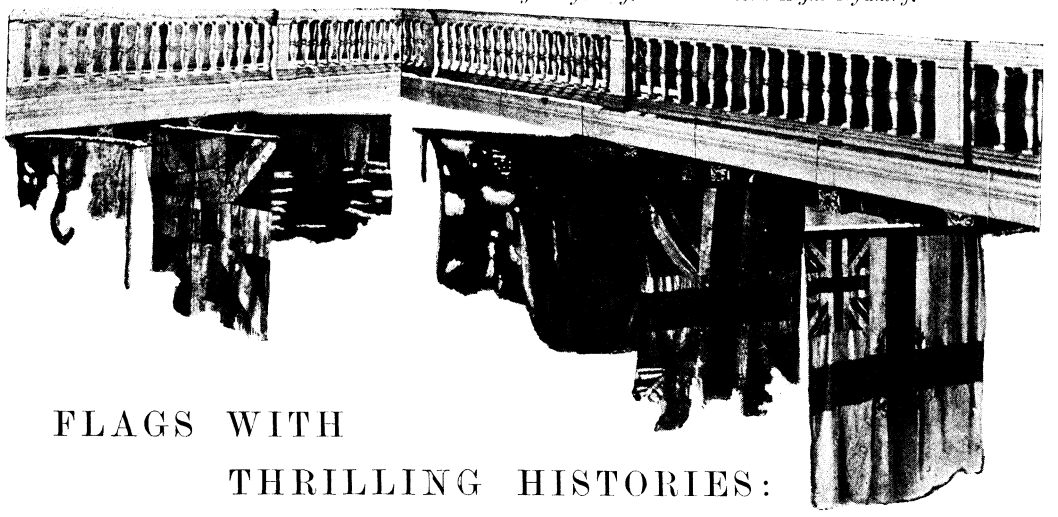
Colours of the 2nd Ghoorkhas. *Colours of the 52nd Light Infantry.* *Colours of the 43rd Light Infantry.*



FLAGS WITH THRILLING HISTORIES:

SILENT WITNESSES OF BRILLIANT DEEDS.

By James R. Abbott.

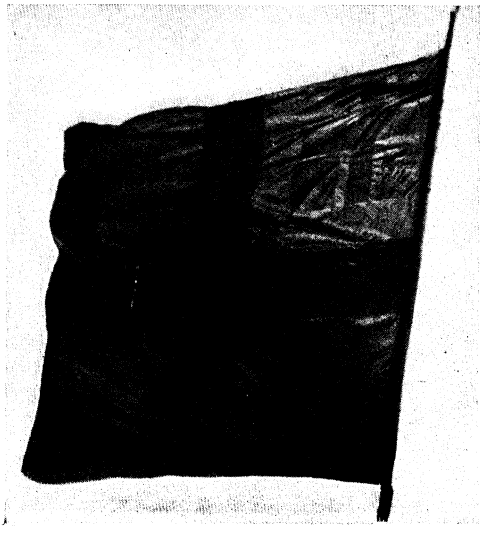
Illustrated from Photographs by W. H. Bunnett.

NO true-born, patriotic Briton ever wearies of the recapitulation of the valorous deeds of Nelson, Wellington, Drake, and many other heroes who have willingly given their lives to the upbuilding and maintenance of Great Britain's supremacy among the nations of the world, and the consolidation of her vast dominion into one harmonious whole. Though these makers of empire have long since departed, their memory is kept evergreen by innumerable relics, connected with their lives, that have been religiously preserved in many of our museums. Probably no relic of the past kindles a stronger patriotism or recalls more vividly to mind the brilliant exploits of these bygone empire builders than does the sight of an old flag, tattered and riddled with shot and shell, grimy with dust, and stained with the life-blood of those who have fought so fiercely to defend its honour.

A moth-eaten rag on a worm-eaten pole,
It does not look likely to stir a man's soul;
'Tis the deeds that were done 'neath the moth-eaten rag,
When the pole was a staff and the rag was a flag.

In many a case, indeed, the colours are entirely missing, and there only remains the bare pole to which, perhaps, still cling a few shreds of silk.

The presentation of a new set of colours to a regiment is an auspicious event, performed, as a rule, by a member of the Royal Family — the presentation has frequently been made by Her Majesty herself — and accompanied by the consecration of the Church. From the moment it enters the service, every man, from the commander of the regiment to the drummer-boy, regards the flag with jealous reverence, and will fight for it with the greatest desperation; for a regiment that loses its colours in battle con-



COLOUR OF THE 33RD DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S REGIMENT, CARRIED AT THE DUKE'S FUNERAL. NOW IN THE ROYAL UNITED SERVICE MUSEUM.

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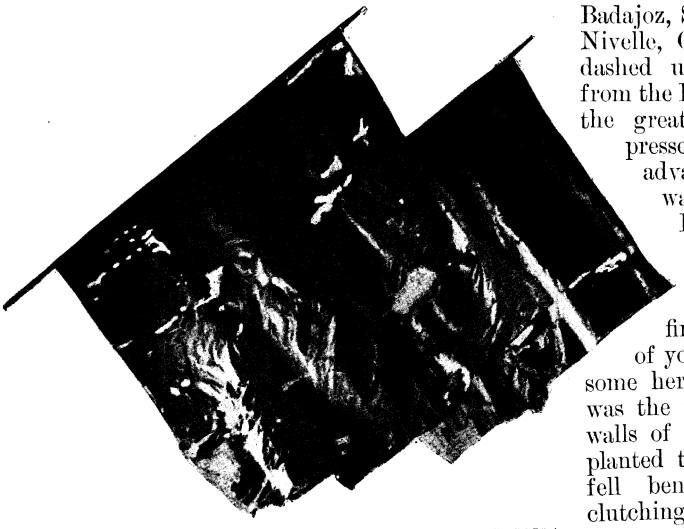

TWO COLOURS CAPTURED FROM THE FRENCH IN CORSICA, 1794; IN THE ATTACK UPON CALVI, WHERE THE FIRST COLOUR WAS CAPTURED, NELSON LOST HIS EYE. NOW IN THE ROYAL UNITED SERVICE MUSEUM.

siders itself disgraced before the eyes of the nation. A soldier who has been instrumental in saving the colours is as honourably decorated as if he had rescued a wounded comrade under a searching fire from the enemy.

In the battle of the Alma, the 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers—one of the bravest regiments in the British Army, which had already won great distinctions for gallantry in Egypt, at Corunna, Martinique, Albuera, Badajoz, Salamanca, Vittoria, the Pyrenees, Nivelle, Orthes, Toulouse, and Waterloo—dashed up the slope under a terrific fire from the Russian batteries. Notwithstanding the great gaps torn in their ranks, they pressed on, gained the heights, and advanced with a splendid sweep towards the Great Redoubt. The Russians gave way. Lieutenant Anstruther, who was carrying the colours, was a mere boy fresh from school, under fire for the first time, but, with the impetuosity of youth and a determination to achieve some heroic deed, he sprang forward and was the first to gain the redoubt, upon the walls of which, with an exultant shout, he planted the colours. The next moment he fell beneath a shower of bullets, still clutching the staff with his dying grip,

LORD WANTAGE GAINED HIS V.C. FOR HIS HEROIC DEFENCE OF THIS COLOUR AT THE BATTLE OF THE ALMA. NOW IN THE GUARDS' CHAPEL, WELLINGTON BARRACKS.

SECTION OF THE FLAG (BELIEVED TO BE THE ONLY PIECE IN EXISTENCE) FLOWN ON THE "VICTORY" AT THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR, 1805, UTILISED AS A PALL AT NELSON'S FUNERAL. NOW IN THE ROYAL UNITED SERVICE MUSEUM.

while the colours fell round his body as a pall. The young hero was a general favourite in the regiment, but there was no time then to mourn his loss, for the cry rang out, "The colours are in danger!" Immediately a private sprang forward, drew the colours gently from the dead lieutenant's grasp, and waved them aloft to reassure the regiment of their safety. The fire of the

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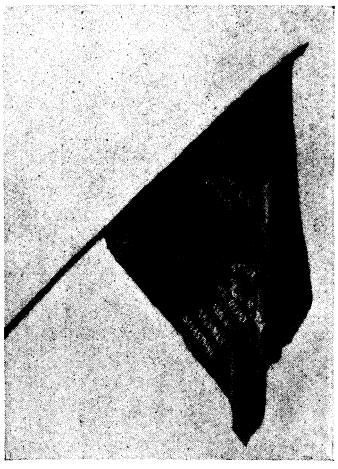
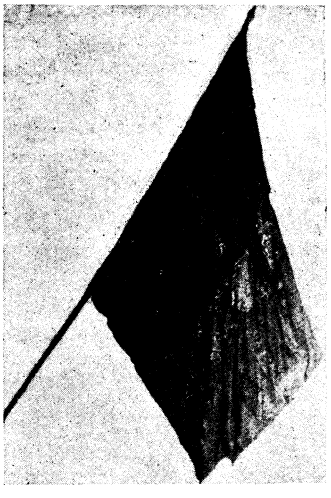


COLOUR PRESENTED TO THE COLDSTREAMS FOR THEIR HEROIC CONDUCT AT INKERMANN. NOW IN ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

while the staff of one was cut clean in two.

Many famous colours, priceless relics of Britain's battles on sea and land, gracefully adorn to-day the interior of the banqueting hall of old Whitehall Palace, now the Museum of the Royal United Service Institution. Through the courtesy of the secretary of that Institution, Lieutenant-Colonel R. Holden, a well-known authority on military colours, to whom we are indebted for much of the information respecting these various colours, we are able to reproduce six of the most famous colours preserved in this Museum. Those claiming first attention are the colours belonging to the 33rd Duke of Wellington's Regiment, then known as the 1st Yorkshire (West Riding). There are only two honours inscribed upon them, viz., "Peninsula" and "Seringapatam." It may be as well to mention, *en passant*, that because a colour is covered with honours it has not necessarily passed through all the engagements inscribed upon it. Such is not the case, for the inscription only signifies that the regiment has won honourable distinction in the conflicts mentioned. These two particular standards have never been in action, but are interesting from the fact that they were requisitioned to follow the coffin of the Duke of Wellington at his funeral on November 18th, 1852. It was only fitting that this regiment should play an important part in the last sad obsequies of the great hero, as it was commanded by the Iron Duke in his first campaign in India, and shared in his crowning victory at Waterloo. A curious incident is linked with these colours. When they were brought from Glasgow to London for the funeral they reposed for the time being at the residence of Lieutenant-Colonel F. R. Blake, in Portland Place. The Colonel's wife's ideas on regimental colours were rather limited, and with a characteristic housewife's instinct she thought what a fine thing it would be to renovate the tattered regimental colours, which she felt sure must have been disgracefully neglected by the regiment to fall into such a state of dilapidation. The idea had no sooner occurred to her than she decided to act, and surreptitiously remedied the evil by utilising her own white silk wedding-dress. The consternation of the regiment when they recognised that the highly prized rents in their colours, resulting from rough usage in battle, had been neatly patched, can be better imagined than described. But either out of consideration for the lady's feelings, or in the interests of the longevity of the colours themselves, the repairs were never removed, and can be distinguished plainly to this day.



COLOUR OF THE 1ST COLDSTREAMS, CARRIED THROUGH THE CRIMEA. NOW IN THE ROYAL MILITARY CHAPEL, WELLINGTON BARRACKS.

The four colours on the right hand of our headpiece belonged respectively to the 43rd Monmouthshire Light Infantry,

COLOUR OF THE 3RD GRENADIERS, CARRIED THROUGH THE CRIMEA. NOW IN THE ROYAL MILITARY CHAPEL, WELLINGTON BARRACKS.

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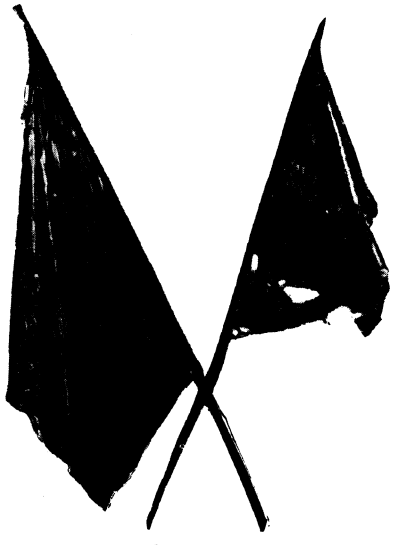
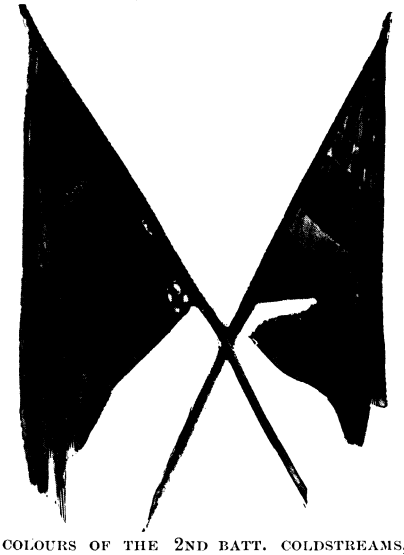
now the 1st Battalion Oxfordshire Light Infantry, and the 52nd Light Infantry, now the 2nd Battalion of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry. Both these regiments played a very prominent part in the famous Peninsula campaign of 1810–11, especially at the battle of Busaco, where they almost annihilated the French troops under Marshal Ney.

The colours of the famous 43rd shown in our illustration were presented to the regiment at Valenciennes, in 1818, to replace those which had been carried through the Peninsula and had left their remnants upon every battlefield. This regiment did not take part in the battle of Waterloo, and Wellington, when complaining bitterly of the heterogeneous mass of troops under his command, expressed the desire for "his old Spanish infantry," among the most valiant of which had been the 43rd. In 1827 these colours were withdrawn from service in favour of a new set bearing the authorised eleven additional honours, and were retained by the commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel William Haverfield. They were restored to the regiment several years ago. It was the custom until quite recently for the commanding officer to retain the old colours when a new set was presented to his regiment, and, consequently, several old colours abounding with thrilling histories have been irretrievably lost, while one or two are still preserved as family heirlooms in the hands of the descendants of well-known military men.



COLOURS OF THE 2ND GRENADIERS, CARRIED THROUGH THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO. NOW IN THE ROYAL MILITARY CHAPEL, WELLINGTON BARRACKS.

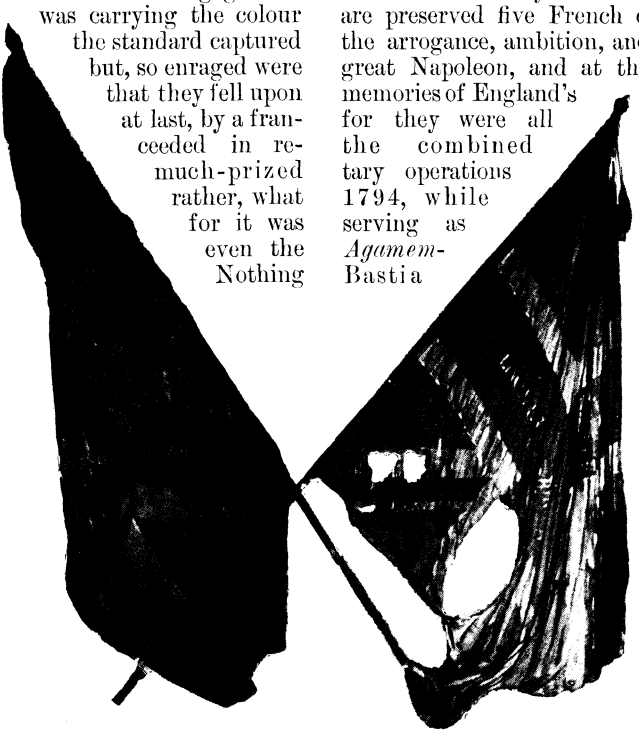


COLOURS OF THE 2ND BATT. COLDSTREAMS, CARRIED THROUGH THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO. NOW IN THE ROYAL MILITARY CHAPEL, WELLINGTON BARRACKS.

The King's colour of the sister battalion is in such a sorry state of dilapidation that the remaining pieces can scarcely cling to the staff. In the Peninsula this regiment vied with the celebrated 43rd in valiant accomplishment. The regimental colour is covered with no less than thirteen honours, the 52nd having fought in India, and later on in the Peninsula, at the engagements of Vimiera, the disastrous retreat of Sir John Moore and the subsequent battle of Corunna, Busaco, Fuentes d'Onoro, Ciudad Rodrigo, the brilliant storming of Badajoz, the overwhelming rout of the French at Salamanca, where the victors, among other trophies, secured two eagles and six standards; at Vittoria, Toulouse, Nivelle, Nive, Orthes, and Waterloo. In the last battle the 52nd, together with the 71st and the 2nd Battalion of the 95th Rifles, constituting Adams' light brigade, were on the right wing of the first line of the allied forces, and just before Wellington gave the command for the whole army to advance upon the shattered troops of Napoleon, were despatched against those of the enemy posted on the Charleroi road, to facilitate the Prussians' advance.

The brave conduct under fire, and superb indifference to death, which are characteristic of the troops of Greater Britain, generally and especially, perhaps, of the lithe little Ghoorkhas and Sikhs, have always excited the admiration of Englishmen. That the Ghoorkhas are prepared to fight like demons for her who is now the Empress of

their native land, is amply evidenced by the remains of the four Ghoorkha colours that now hang from the balcony in this Museum. These belonged to the 2nd (Prince of Wales' Own) Ghoorkha (rifle) Regiment, and so fierce were the conflicts waged around them that but little of the original standards now remain, while that which survives is freely stained with blood. The first two were carried in the Sutlej campaign of 1845-6—when the Sikhs, a most courageous foe, rose in rebellion—including the battles of Aliwal and Bhuddiwal. In the latter engagement the officer who was carrying the colour was killed, and the standard captured by the Sikhs; but, so enraged were the Ghoorkhas, that they fell upon the Sikhs, and at last, by a frantic effort, succeeded in recapturing their much-prized colour—or, rather, what was left of it, for it was in tatters, while even the staff was missing. Nothing daunted, however, the Ghoorkhas rigged it upon a bamboo pole, from which its honoured remains still hang. In the Indian Mutiny these Ghoorkhas played a conspicuously loyal part. Outside the walls of Delhi their bravery was especially in evidence, for they sustained and defeated twenty-six separate attacks upon the posts, in the course of which they lost eight, killed and wounded, out of nine officers, and 327, killed and wounded, out of 490 men. Both colours are perforated with innumerable bullet-holes. The black regimental colour was cut in two by a thirty-two pounder round shot, which killed and wounded three officers and ten men.



COLOURS OF THE 1ST SCOTS AND 3RD GRENADIERS, CARRIED THROUGH THE CRIMEA. NOW IN THE ROYAL MILITARY CHAPEL, WELLINGTON BARRACKS.

It is the proud boast of the British services that, notwithstanding the hundreds of battles in which they have been engaged, few of their colours have been captured. But the same cannot be said with regard to the French. In fact, during the Peninsula campaign so many French eagles were captured that very little value was attached to them. On one occasion, after a terrible battle in which Lord Wellington inflicted a severe defeat upon Marshal Marmont, the Duke was anxious to collect all the eagles taken from the enemy before sending home his despatches relating to the English triumph. Great was his consternation to find, on inquiry, that Marshal Beresford's regiment, the Connaught Rangers, who had captured three, had actually sold them to a sutler for a *bottle of rum!* In this Museum are preserved five French colours, recalling the arrogance, ambition, and tyranny of the great Napoleon, and at the same time sad memories of England's greatest admiral, for they were all captured during the combined naval and military operations in Corsica, in 1794, while Nelson was serving as captain of the *Agamemnon*, against Bastia and Calvi. At the siege of the latter place, Nelson, with his undaunted courage, was first in the successful attack, and lost the sight of one eye in the engagement. The other colour is that of the 52e *Régiment d'Infanterie*, 1791-94. The most interesting fact in connection with these colours is that they are among the earliest French colours known to be in existence.

A special interest is woven around the subject of our illustration on page 258, for it is a valued portion of the Union Jack that was flown on Nelson's flagship, the *Victory*, at the battle of Trafalgar, when Britannia's supremacy on the waves was once and for all established. The flag which had flown bravely during that fiercely contested conflict constituted the pall to the coffin of the dead hero of the day at the public funeral that was accorded to him in St. Paul's Cathedral. Just as his body, with the flag, was about to be lowered into its last resting

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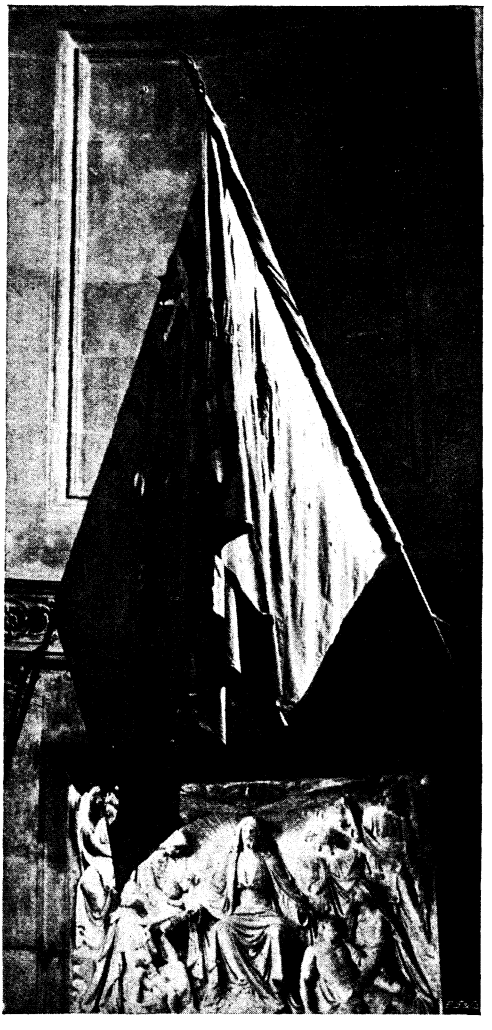
place, the sailors who were bearing it, and who had fought so nobly under him, rushed forward, snatched it from the coffin, and tore it into pieces as mementoes of the great admiral. One by one these relics have disappeared, till this is believed to be the only



COLOURS OF THE 57TH MIDDLESEX, CARRIED THROUGH THE NEW ZEALAND CAMPAIGN OF 1860-64. NOW HANGING IN ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

portion in existence. It is preserved with pious care beneath a glass case.

The bravest defence of the colours on record was the work of Captain Robert James Lloyd-Lindsay, now Lord Wantage, at the battle of the Alma, where he served as a lieutenant in the Scots Fusilier Guards. This was his first battle, and he was deputed to carry the Queen's colour, accompanied by Lieutenant Thistlethwayte, bearing the regimental standard. In the memorable storming of the heights there were two other regiments of Fusiliers engaged, the Royal, and the Royal Welsh, besides the Scots. As the British troops approached the Russian battery, remnants of the Light Division fell back into the front line of the Scots Fusiliers, throwing them into confusion. At the same moment the command was heard, "Fusiliers retire." The Scots, labouring under the mistaken apprehension that the order referred to them, as they had been drilled under that title, though it really applied to one of the two other Fusilier regiments, obeyed the command and fell back. For a moment everything was confusion, but it was not long before the officers realised the error and exerted themselves to bring the disorganised Scots once more into fighting array. This was soon accomplished, and the men, with Lieutenants Lindsay and Thistlethwayte in the van, were soon charging once more up the slope. But the Russians had observed the temporary confusion, and, misconstruing it into a panic, swooped down upon this gallant, unsupported little band, and for a few moments it seemed as if it would be cut to pieces and the precious colours captured. But this was not to be. Most of the party fell back, but the two colour-bearers, recognising their dangerous situation, stood their ground back to back and blazed away might and main with their revolvers. But even this could only stave off the inevitable for a few moments, as the Russians were determined to obtain possession of the coveted colours at all costs. At this juncture, however, Sergeant M'Kechnie and Private W. Reynolds, perceiving the peril of Lindsay and Thistlethwayte, rallied a few men and dashed forward to their assistance, while at the same instant Captain Hugh Drummond, whose horse had been shot under him, disengaged himself and with a shout sprang forward, revolver in hand, at the psychological moment. The Russians turned their attention to him, and this diversion saved the situation, for the rallied battalion now charged again and swept the Russians before it. For this heroic stand the Victoria Cross was bestowed upon Captain Lloyd-Lindsay, a distinction also awarded to Sergeant M'Kechnie and Private Reynolds. The Queen's colour was torn with innumerable bullet-holes, while the staff was cut in two by grape shot. This fracture has since been repaired, and the colour now hangs in

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honour in the chancel of the Guards' Chapel, Wellington Barracks.

The regiments which probably arouse the greatest enthusiasm among Britishers are those which constitute the Household Troops of England, but are more familiarly known as the "Guards." They are divided into six regiments, three cavalry, styled respectively the 1st Life Guards, the 2nd Life Guards, and the Royal Horse Guards, or Blues; and three of infantry, the Grenadier Guards, the Coldstream Guards, and the Scots Fusilier Guards. It is impossible to enumerate all the brilliant exploits that have signalised the Guards, especially in the Napoleonic and Crimean wars. In the battle of Waterloo they covered themselves with glory. The colour-bearer of the 2nd Battalion of the 1st Foot was wounded while carrying the colours into action, but he did not suffer them to fall into the enemy's hands.

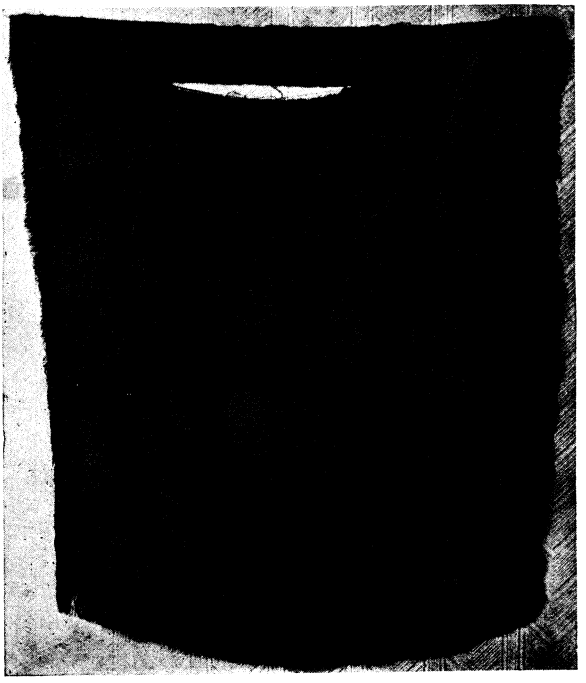
In the Crimea the Guards won further distinctions. In one conflict with the Russians they lost one of their colours, but it was soon regained. The slaughter among their ranks in the terrible engagement of Inkermann was frightful, especially round the sandbag battery. When the Guards captured this stronghold, the Russians, with their great preponderance of numbers, hurled themselves with relentless fury upon it and succeeded in driving out the English, but at this moment the Grenadier and Fusilier Guards came up, with the Duke of Cambridge at their head. "You must drive them out," said the Duke, and drive them out they did, though the Russians were so obstinate that it was only at the point of the bayonet.

In view of the recent achievement of the British troops in the Soudan, our last illustration possesses a unique interest, inasmuch as it is the green banner given by the first Mahdi to Arabi Pasha for the purpose of rallying his followers. It was captured by Lieutenant Hamilton Martin at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir in 1882. We leave the story of its capture to be told in his own words. He writes :—

"The flag was flying outside Arabi Pasha's tent, shortly after daybreak, on the 13th September, 1882, during the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. At that time I was serving in the 19th Princess of Wales' Hussars, under Colonel Kendall Coghill, C.B. The instructions given to the 19th Hussars the previous evening had been that on the first gun being heard the regiment should mount and make straight for the trenches. At dawn, through a grey mist, the troopers found themselves within a very short distance of a redoubt and a 40-pound gun. Surprised, the Arab gunner fired at random, and, unless I am much mistaken, that shot opened the battle.

"The 19th mounted, being some miles to the rear, having slept on the Desert the night before with the horses' reins thrown over their arms. On arriving at the trenches, we passed through the intervals of the Seaforth Highlanders, who cheered us heartily. There were three tents, in one of which the ink with which Arabi had been writing was still wet."

This banner, which is about three feet square, is of silk, green in colour, and edged with a fine gold fringe. When captured it was torn from the pole. For many years it flew on the flagstaff surmounting Lieutenant Hamilton Martin's residence at Eridge Park, near Tunbridge Wells.



GREEN BANNER GIVEN BY THE 1ST MAHDI TO ARABI PASHA. CAPTURED AT TEL-EL-KEBIR, 1882, BY LIEUTENANT HAMILTON MARTIN, OF THE 19TH HUSSARS.

Photo by Lankester and Sawyer, Regent Street W.C.

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COME, I'll show you a country that none can surpass,
For a flyer to cross like a bird on the wing.
We have acres of woodland and oceans of grass,
We have game in the autumn and cubs in the spring;
We have scores of good fellows hang out in the shire,
But the best of them all is the Galloping Squire.

The Galloping Squire to the saddle has got,
While the dewdrop is melting in gems on the thorn,
From the kennel he's drafted the pick of his lot.
How they swarm to his cheer! How they fly to his horn!
Like harriers turning or chasing like fire,
"I can trust 'em, each hound!" says the Galloping Squire.

One wave of his arm, to the covert they throng;
"Yoi! wind him! and rouse him! By Jove! he's away!"
Through a gap in the oaks see them speeding along
O'er the open like pigeons: "They *mean* it to-day!
You may jump till you're sick—you may spur till you tire!
For it's catch 'em who can!" says the Galloping Squire.

Then he takes the old horse by the head, and he sails
In the wake of his darlings, all ear and all eye,
As they come in his line, o'er banks, fences, and rails,
The cramped ones to creep, and the fair ones to fly.
It's a *very* queer place that will put in the mire
Such a rare one to ride as the Galloping Squire.

But a fallow has brought to their noses the pack,
And the pasture beyond is with cattle-stains spread;
One wave of his arm, and the Squire in a crack
Has lifted and thrown in the beauties at head.
"On a morning like this, it's small help you require,
But he's forward, I'll swear!" says the Galloping Squire.

So forty fair minutes they run and they race,
'Tis a heaven to some! 'tis a lifetime to all;
Though the horses we ride are such gluttons for pace,
There are stout ones that stop, there are safe ones that fall.
But the names of the vanquished need never transpire,
For they're all in the rear of the Galloping Squire.

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THE GALLOPING SQUIRE.

By S. E. Waller.

Till the gamest old varmint that ever drew breath,
All stiffened and draggled, held high for a throw,
O'er the squire's jolly visage, is grinning in death,
Ere he dashes him down to be eaten below;
While the daws flutter out from a neighbouring spire
At the thrilling who-whoop of the Galloping Squire.

And the labourer at work, and the lord in his hall,
Have a jest or a smile when they hear of the sport;
In ale or in claret he's toasted by all,
For they never expect to see more of the sort.
And long may it be ere he's forced to retire,
For we breed very few like the Galloping Squire.

STORIES OF THE GOLD STAR LINE.

By L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace.

Illustrated by Adolf Thiede.

No. II.—THE CYPHER WITH THE HUMAN KEY.

THE details of the following story have been for many months a matter of history to every official on the Gold Star Line, but though circulated privately they have never been made public property before.

It was a cold, cheerless evening in the early part of May, 1897, that the *Morning Star* sailed from Sydney Harbour with both first and second saloons crowded to overflowing. The reason for this was the great Jubilee festival which was to be held in London in the following June. Colonial visitors from all parts of the Queen's dominions were flocking to it, and as I glanced round at the passengers I thought that I had never seen a more miscellaneous assortment. There were squatters and bushmen from up country in loud check suits and cabbage-tree hats, flash specimens of the Stock Exchange and racing fraternity, a few wealthy hotel keepers with their families, and a fair sprinkling of that marvellous and nondescript creature only seen to perfection on big liners—the professional globe-trotter. But of all the mixed collection, two men who came on board at the last moment most attracted my attention. They spoke English well, were dressed like gentlemen, declared themselves to be Englishmen who had lived for several years in the bush, had no trace of roughness or want of civilisation about them, but had without exception the most sinister faces I ever saw in my life. They were strangely alike, too, in appearance—so much so that I would have put them down as brothers had not their names been entered in the ship's lists as George Wilson and Henry Sebright. They were first-class passengers, and never committed any solecism or made themselves disagreeable in any way whatsoever; nevertheless, I noticed that no girl liked to speak to them, and that even the men gave them more or less a cold shoulder. A history of crime seemed to be written on both their faces, on the thin lips and narrow, shifty eyes, and yet their features in themselves were good, and they had mellow, pleasant voices.

The ship was so full that I had much difficulty in making things go smoothly. This was partly accounted for by the fact that I had to reserve one whole state-room with three berths for a man who had booked them by wire through the manager of our office in Sydney. Such a request, however inconvenient, had to be carried out, and the passenger for whom so much accommodation was necessary was expected to arrive on board at Adelaide. I imagined that he must in consequence be a person of some importance, and in this conjecture events proved me to be right.

I happened to be standing near the gangway

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as he came on board, leaning on the arm of a slim, pretty-looking girl, for whom, however, no special accommodation had been made. She was to occupy an upper berth in a four-berth cabin in company with other ladies, who were of course total strangers to her. One glance at her face showed me, however, that she was the sort of girl who would think very little of personal inconvenience, and that all her thoughts at present were centred on the man with whom she had come on board. There was sufficient likeness between the pair for me to guess that they were father and daughter. The man looked very ill. His face was of a livid grey colour, the cheeks were drawn and hollow, and the eyes glowing with hectic fever. I noticed that several pairs of eyes followed the new passenger and his pretty daughter as they slowly made their way across the deck towards the companion, and in the background I observed the two men whom I have already spoken about gazing at them with eager and intensely curious expressions on their evil faces.

We soon got under way again, and for the time I forgot the new passengers in a quantity of work that engaged all my thoughts.

A few days later, Cairns, our ship's doctor, came up and accosted me.

"I am very sorry about Rutherford," he said; "he will never see England, I fear."

"Do you mean our new passenger?" I inquired.

"Yes, I have examined him carefully. The poor chap has only got one lung, and that is going fast. His leaving shore as he has done is nothing short of madness. I told him so. He gave me a queer answer."

"What was that?" I inquired.

"He said, 'I know all about it, and I have my reasons, but I don't mean to die before the right moment comes.' He then told me that he has some oxygen cylinders in his cabin, and intends to keep himself going with these until we reach Suez. What in the world can it mean? Using such cylinders is of course against the rules, but the good old skipper will always stretch a point. As Rutherford was speaking to me his daughter came in. He calls her Elizabeth sometimes, and sometimes Betty. She is a fine girl, and you can see at a glance that she is tremendously fond of him. She is no fool with regard to his condition—I noticed that—but she was as cheerful in his presence as if he had not a pin's point the matter."

"It is a pity the man came on board," was my rejoinder after a moment's pause.

"I cannot understand it, for my part," reiterated Cairns in a thoughtful voice.

I looked him full in the face.

"What are you driving at?" I said at last; "do you suppose there is a mystery anywhere?"

"Oh, I don't know! I fancy somehow that my new patient has got something on his mind. The way he is burning himself up is really little short of madness. Of course he cannot last any time the way he goes on. From his way of speaking I think he is a medical man, too, and must know well what he is doing."

"Leaning on the arm of a pretty-looking girl."

Cairns left me and I went on deck. There was a heavy sea running, and my morning's work being over, I sat by a skylight to smoke a cigar. Just before me the two Englishmen, Wilson and Sebright, were wrangling over a game of deck quoits at half-crown points. Presently I noticed the invalid, Mr. Rutherford, coming slowly on deck. With uncertain and feeble steps he came lurching in my direction, and presently sat down with a heavy sigh in an empty deck chair by my side. To my astonishment the moment he

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did so the men stopped playing and came up and spoke to him. He replied in a friendly tone, and I saw at once that they were old acquaintances.

"I will bet two to one on you, Wilson," he cried.

"I will take you," laughed the other—"in sovereigns?"

"Certainly," answered the invalid, bowing his head slightly.

The men collected the quoits and began

"I saw him take her hand."

to play, showing a good deal of volatile excitement as they did so.

"You are a good sailor, Mr. Rutherford," I remarked, as the vessel lifted and swung down on the heavy trade swell.

"Oh, I am never sea-sick," was his slow reply; "consumptives never are, you know. I find the sea a marvellous pick-me-up."

"I am glad of that," I replied, "and I hope the voyage will do you good."

He did not answer, and just at that moment I saw Miss Rutherford coming on deck. She smiled when she saw her father, a bright smile full of tenderness and courage, and then to my great amazement paused opposite the two men.

"Ah! that was well done, Mr. Sebright," she said. "What an adept you are at the game!"

They both dropped their quoits and began to talk eagerly to her.

She chatted in the gayest fashion, laughing heartily many times, and then seemed to throw herself into their pastime with great zest.

"Father," she cried out suddenly, "Mr. Wilson has lost, so you must pay. He says you have taken him in sovereigns."

With a smile Mr. Rutherford put his hand into his pocket, drew out a couple of sovereigns and laid them in Sebright's palm.

"The wind is rather cold just here, my dear," he said, turning to his daughter; "will you help me to my cabin?"

She gave him her arm and they walked down the deck. A moment later Wilson and Sebright followed them. Presently, as I passed Rutherford's cabin, I saw the door open and Miss Rutherford and her father entertaining my sinister fellow-passengers with a bottle of wine.

"Now, what can this mean?" I said to myself. "Surely a girl of Miss Rutherford's type cannot really admire men of the Wilson and Sebright order?"

Nevertheless, I soon began to think myself in the wrong, for stately as her manners were and outwardly correct her bearing, Miss Betty—pretty Miss Betty, as nearly everyone on board had learned to call her—did give up a great deal of her time to the two men; in particular she seemed to single out Wilson for her most gracious attention. She paced the deck in the evening by his side, and once I saw him take her hand and hold it for nearly half a minute. I was standing not far off when this happened, and I noticed at the same instant that the girl turned white, that she bit her lips, and a look of pain so intense came into her face that tears absolutely started to her eyes.

She bore Wilson's handclasp, however, without the smallest show of unwillingness, and he never noticed the queer expression on her face.

From that moment I began to watch Miss Betty with great interest. That she did not

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really like either of the men I was firmly convinced. Why, then, did she treat them, Wilson in particular, as if they were special friends?

Mr. Rutherford got rapidly worse. I heard this from Cairns, who spent a good deal of his time in his cabin, and was on several occasions called up at night to attend to him.

"How is your patient?" I said to him a few days later.

"Why, Conway," was his reply, "you are the very man I want. As to my poor patient, he won't last much longer. I was just coming to find you; I want you to come with me to his cabin. He wishes us both to hear something he has got to say, so will you come now and hear what it is he wants?"

"By all means," I replied; "but what about Miss Betty?"

"I believe she is on deck, but he wishes her to be present, too."

"Then I will go up and fetch her," I answered. I ran up the companion and found the young girl standing near the taffrail, leaning slightly over it and looking down at the waves as we raced quickly over them. By her side stood the detestable Wilson. Since Miss Rutherford had bestowed so much notice upon him he had seemed to have gained in self-assurance and swagger. The easy, gentlemanly manners which had marked his conduct during his first few days on board now gave place to a sort of devil-may-care attitude. Sebright, however, was still gentle and subservient. At the present moment he was nowhere in sight, and Wilson stood far nearer to Miss Rutherford than I considered in good taste.

"I have been sent by your father to fetch you," I said.

"Is he worse?" she inquired. She looked round eagerly. Once again I noticed that queer pallor in her face, and the expression of unspoken anguish round her eyes, but the next moment it had vanished. She turned a bright, laughing face towards her companion.

"I must go now," she said, "but I will see you again after lunch. Good-bye."

She tripped down the companion, and I followed her. A moment later we found ourselves in the sick man's cabin. He was lying on one of the bunks, and as we came in he rose slowly and asked us to be seated.

"Betty, my dear," he said, turning to his daughter, "close and lock the door."

She did so; then she went and knelt by his side. Nothing could exceed the tenderness in her face. I noticed then its strength, the strong contour of the chin, the curves of the firm lips.

"Are you quite sure you are strong enough to go into this matter to-day?" she said. Her voice sank to a whisper, but low as it was both Cairns and I heard it.

"Yes, my darling, I had better get it over; it will be a relief, Betty."

"Then that is all right," she said. "Please, gentlemen, come close up to my father; it hurts his chest to talk too loud. Now, then, father, dear."

The sick man glanced first at her and then at us, and began.

"I want to make a certain disclosure to you two gentlemen," he said; "my daughter is here to answer for its genuineness."

"But surely," I interrupted, "your own word is sufficient?"

"It would doubtless be quite sufficient if I could tell you all, but it is necessary for me to conceal the really important part. When the right time comes a full confidence will be made to you, but that time is not yet. Without knowing all, therefore, I want you both to make me an important promise. God only knows how tremendous an issue hangs on your compliance!"

Neither Cairns nor I said a word, but our eyes were fixed intently on the sick man's face. Miss Betty laid one of her slim hands on his arm.

"You will be brief, father," she said; "the gentlemen will, I know, understand matters quickly. You must be brief."

"I must tell what I have to tell in my own way," was the reply. "Now, then, sirs, I want to inform you both that, feeble and ill as I am, I am engaged on a mission of the utmost secrecy and importance. On me and on my daughter depends the exposure of one of the most diabolical conspiracies of the present day. There are many lives in imminent danger, and amongst them are some of the highest and noblest in England."

As he said the last words he lowered his voice and spoke very slowly, as if he were watching the effect of his communication upon us both. After a moment's pause he continued.

"My daughter and I alone can stop an appalling catastrophe, and we can only do this by your aid."

"You may depend upon my aid, for one," I said with sudden impulse.

Miss Rutherford raised her grey eyes and gave me a look of gratitude.

"I am the messenger of a private agency in Sydney," continued the sick man, "and

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have been employed on this very matter for the last six months. As you, Dr. Cairns, are aware, I have only a few weeks at the longest to live. I shall never see England, but I know that by means of the oxygen which I keep in these cylinders I shall keep myself alive until we reach Suez. I wish to live until then—I equally wish to die then, for it is all-important that my body should be consigned to the Bitter Lake."

Here he paused, being interrupted by a violent fit of coughing. He had spoken quietly and seemed perfectly composed, but as he said the last words an irresistible conviction seized me that the man must be insane. I glanced at Cairns, but saw no reflection of my thought on his face; and as to Miss Rutherford, except for two burning spots which had appeared on her cheeks, she did not show any special emotion.

"When I reach the Bitter Lake I shall die," continued the invalid, speaking now almost cheerfully, and in a most matter-of-fact voice; "and," he continued, "as a necessary consequence my body will be buried there. Now, it is absolutely necessary for the success of my scheme that my body should be buried in the Bitter Lake, and it is equally necessary that it should reach England."

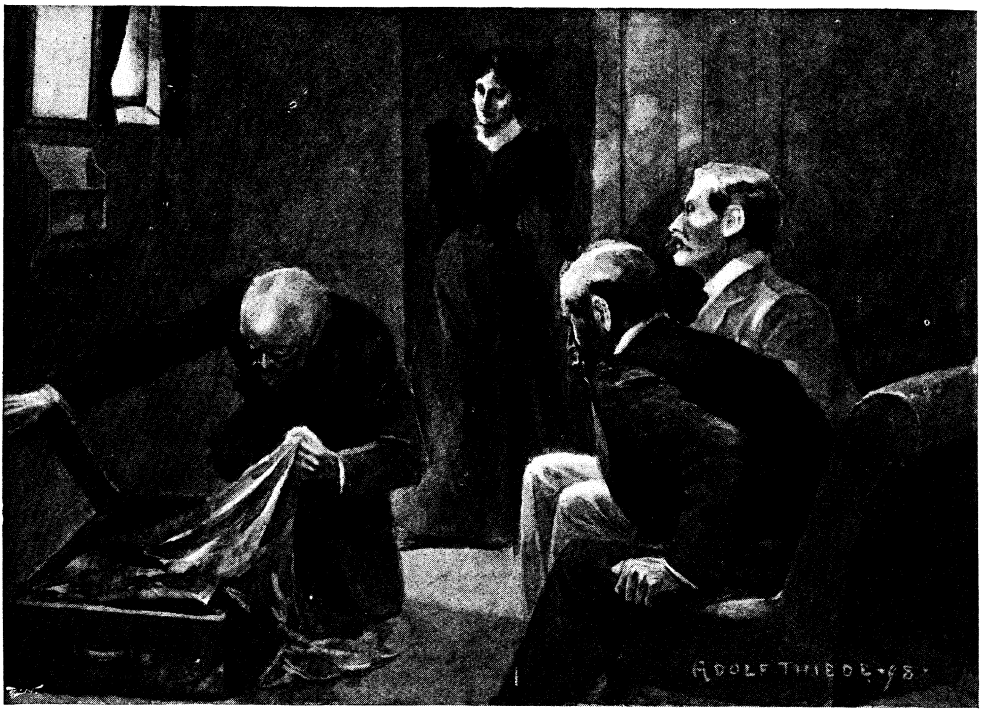
"What do you mean?" I cried.

Cairns now interrupted, his eyes sparkling with suppressed fire.

"I can assure you, Mr. Rutherford," he said, "that if it were really essential, it would be possible to convey your body to England on board the *Morning Star;* we could embalm——"

The invalid raised his hand with an irritable gesture.

"You must hear me out," he said. "There are two men on board involved in the great conspiracy to which I have just alluded."



"He drew out a strange oil silk case."

"What?" I cried, springing from my seat, "do you allude to Wilson and Sebright?"

"I would prefer not to name the persons," he answered. "They are on board, and it is necessary, absolutely necessary to the fulfilment of my scheme that they should both see my body committed to the deep. When this event has taken place their worst fears will be laid to rest, and"—here he glanced at his daughter—"Miss Rutherford will do the rest."

"I will not fail," she said; "I will act my part to the end."

"I know that well," was her father's reply. "Gentlemen," he added, glancing at

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us both, "this girl has the spirit of a man in her veins; she will neither falter nor swerve until the whole scheme which we have come on board to complete has been carried through to the bitter end."

Miss Betty drew herself up and her eyes flashed with fire.

Mr. Rutherford continued to speak.

"The men to whom I have alluded must see my body go to the bottom of the Lake loaded with twenty pounds of chain cable. Gentlemen, it will be your business to see that this is done."

"That would be done in the natural course," said Cairns slowly; "but, my dear sir, the subject is a painful one—why dwell on it?"

"I must do so, and I must also get your distinct promise, Dr. Cairns, and yours also, Mr. Conway, that you will both personally superintend the matter."

I bowed. Cairns did not speak.

"My body must be buried," continued the dying man, "but it must also rise again. I have made all the necessary arrangements to ensure this. It will be picked up by the British Agent at Suez in a steamboat which will follow the ship. Already I have advised him by cable that I am coming by this boat." He leant back, and I could see the muscles that showed on his face working spasmodically.

"And now," he said, "for my final instructions." He rose slowly, crossed the cabin, and kneeling before a large trunk, opened it. From this receptacle he drew out a strange oil silk case.

"You will place my body in this," he said, "lacing it tightly together after doing so. You will then sew my body in canvas in the usual way. This case consists of a double covering, containing an air-tight chamber between two layers which are now collapsed. At one end there is an aluminium case, one side of which is made of felt. This case contains seven pounds of calcium carbide. From the box a tube guarded by a valve communicates with the indiarubber chamber, and as soon as the water by its pressure has forced its way through the felt and reached this substance an enormous evolution of acetylene gas will take place and will inflate the whole covering. The specific gravity will be instantly lowered to such an extent that in less than twenty minutes my body will once again reach the surface. I organised this case myself long ago and have made frequent experiments in Sydney Harbour. You quite understand now, Dr. Cairns, what you are expected to do?"

Cairns stood up and began handling the case.

"This is the most ingenious device I ever heard of," he said. "You certainly astonish me. Yes, sir, I think you may rest assured that Conway and I will respect your half confidence, and will see this matter properly carried through."

"Then that is all right," said the sick man. "I have unburdened my mind and can rest. Let my burial be as public as possible; let those—those men to whom I have alluded be present."

He sank back on his seat panting slightly.

"Please go away now," said Miss Rutherford; "he cannot stand any more."

The red spots had faded from her cheeks, but the fire had not left her eyes.

"Whenever the time comes," I said, looking full at her, "you can rely upon me."

"Thank you," she replied.

Cairns and I left the cabin.

The voyage continued without anything special occurring, but Mr. Rutherford now never came on deck, and his daughter spent most of her time by his side. Whenever she was able to go on deck for a little air, she was always found in Wilson's company. She showed apparent pleasure when he approached, and I often heard her talk to him about her father's condition. I thought from Sebright's manner that he was not quite satisfied with the growing friendship between Miss Rutherford and his companion, but Wilson's face beamed with intense self-satisfaction. He dressed more loudly than he had done, and his swagger was more marked. He invariably wore a heavy gold chain, to which a massive locket, which contained a single brilliant in the centre, hung. This appendage gave the final touch to the man's true vulgarity. Once as I approached quite near I heard Sebright say to him—

"I wonder you wear that locket."

"Miss Rutherford admires it," was the strange reply. I could scarcely believe my ears.

On the 18th of June we passed out of the Red Sea, and I shall never forget the day-break on the morning that we steamed slowly up to Suez. I was on deck watching the sun rise when Cairns came quickly to my side. His face was very pale and grave.

"Come down quickly, Conway," he said; "Rutherford is dying. He wishes to see you; he cannot live half an hour."

I followed him at once. Upon the bunk in his state cabin lay the sick man. His

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breath came and went between his blue lips with a horrible hissing sound. Miss Rutherford was standing just behind him. When he saw me he beckoned with his eyes for me to approach, and I bent over him.

"Here is a letter," he said; "give it to the British Agent when he comes on board, and remember what I have asked you and Dr. Cairns to do. Thanks for all your kindness. Good-bye."

"Rest assured that I will do everything in my power to carry out your instructions," I answered; and then glancing at Miss Betty I continued, "You may also depend on my doing what I can for the comfort of your daughter."

The ghost of a smile flitted across his face.

"I trust all will go well," he said, and then I left him.

I went on deck, where I found the British Agent, who had just come on board from the tender which was alongside. I immediately handed him Rutherford's letter. He read it in silence.

"I have made the necessary arrangements," he said after a long pause, and speaking slowly; "everything shall be done as arranged. Is he still alive?"

"Yes, but he is dying fast," I replied.

By this time the passengers began to come on deck, and as the mails were brought on board I noticed Dr. Cairns hurrying towards me.

"It is all over," he said quietly. "We will carry out his instructions as soon as possible."

Wilson happened to be standing close. He cast an anxious glance at us both, then he approached the doctor and whispered—

"Did I hear you say that Mr. Rutherford is dead?"

"Yes," replied Dr. Cairns; "the funeral will take place this morning as soon as we are under way again."

The faintest suspicion of a triumphant smile crept round the man's dark eyes, and I felt I could have struck him as I saw it.

An hour later Cairns and I found ourselves in poor Rutherford's cabin. He was lying in his last sleep; his hands were folded across his chest, and the smile of death lingered round his lips. His daughter was standing near; her eyes were perfectly dry and tearless, and the red spots were brighter than usual on her cheeks.

"I know you will both do what is necessary," she said in a hurried voice when we approached. "I will go to my own cabin until—until you call me."

She left us.

"That is about the bravest girl I ever met in my life," I said, turning to Cairns.

"Don't talk of it; we cannot discuss this matter," said Cairns in a choking voice. "God only knows if we are doing right, but follow out the poor fellow's directions we must."

Scarcely uttering a word we both then began to carry out the instructions which had been so carefully given to us. The dead man's body was laced into the mysterious case with its double covering, and then sewed up in canvas. We sent for the quartermaster and a couple of men, and had the poor fellow carried out to the main deck on a hatchway grating, a Union Jack spread over him. As we reached the deck I saw that we were now well out on the Bitter Lake and going at slow speed.

The news of Rutherford's death had caused some little comment, and several of the passengers collected in a knot round the body as Mr. Hitchcock, a clergyman who happened to be on board, read the service.

Amongst those who stood nearest to the dead man were Miss Rutherford and Wilson. She stood with her back slightly turned to Wilson, her eyes fixed upon the still form covered by the Union Jack. Not for a single instant did her queer stoicism forsake her. The service proceeded, and at the words, "We commit his body to the deep," the screw was stopped for a moment, the men raised the grating, and the body slid down into the still water and disappeared. All was over. As I turned away I glanced up. Looking down now with an almost fiendish smile on his face stood Sebright. I felt I could not bring myself to speak to him, and turned quickly aside. I looked out astern. In the distance I could see the British Agent's boat, which had been lying ready, come slowly puffing out from the landing-stage.

By this time we were again well under way and rapidly leaving the Bitter Lake behind us.

At dinner that evening I could not help noticing a change on Wilson's face. It had hitherto worn a look both of cunning and anxiety; now this had completely vanished, there was a calm expression of ease about his countenance which yet was not without a certain melancholy. I guessed that in some extraordinary way Rutherford's death had given him relief, but that his thoughts were also with Miss Rutherford, who possessed an immense attraction for him, and whose grief he could not help sympathising in.

Sebright, on the other hand, was in boisterous spirits.

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Miss Rutherford did not leave her father's state-room for two or three days. On the morning of the third day, however, she came on deck again. She was dressed in deep mourning and her face was very white. I noticed, too, a strange, almost reckless kind of hardness about her mouth, which was more particularly manifest when Wilson appeared. What did she mean by allowing the attentions of that scoundrel?—for scoundrel I had little doubt he was. I felt almost inclined to remonstrate with her, for was she not, to a certain extent, now under my care?

Once I went up to her for the purpose, but the moment I alluded to Wilson she turned restlessly aside.

"I know that my whole conduct is incomprehensible to you, Mr. Conway," she said; "but you must have patience. By and by you will see the solution of what is now a puzzle. Please understand one thing: I shall never forget your kindness, nor that of Dr. Cairns."

Tears rose to her eyes, but they did not fall.

"I must beg of you not to be too sympathetic," she continued. "I have no time to mourn yet, and, above all things, I must not give way. My father has left the conclusion of this matter in my hands. I have every belief that I shall bring it to a successful issue, but I cannot quite tell yet. But before we reach Plymouth I shall know."

Wilson approached and said something to the girl in a low tone; she turned away with him immediately, and the next moment they were pacing up and down the deck. They remained together during the greater part of the morning, and I observed that at certain times the man talked very earnestly to Miss Rutherford. At lunch they entered the saloon side by side.

Soon afterwards, as I happened to be in my cabin, the two men slowly passed. They did not see me, and I heard Wilson say to Sebright, "Now that everything is safe, I mean to win that girl."

"Then let me tell you, Wilson," was Sebright's reply, "that your increasing intimacy with Miss Rutherford is by no means for the good of——" They passed on and I did not hear any more.

That same evening I noticed Sebright pacing about alone, and now and then casting glances of strong disapproval at the pair who were standing close together leaning over the taffrail of the further deck. Once I passed them slowly. As I did so I heard Miss Rutherford say—

"Call my sentiments what you will, I have a wish to obtain it."

"My God!" was the low smothered reply, "will nothing else content you?"

"Nothing else."

"If I yield, if I give it to you, will you——"

I passed on, much wondering.

The next morning found us close to

"His swagger was more marked."

Plymouth. As we were approaching the harbour Miss Rutherford came up to me.

"How soon shall we arrive?" she asked.

"In about an hour," I answered.

"Then the time has come for me to give you my full confidence. Will you and Dr. Cairns come with me to my father's state-room?"

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"Certainly," I answered.

I fetched the doctor, and we both hurried down the companion to the state-room. Miss Rutherford had gone on before; she was waiting for us. As soon as we had entered she placed herself between us and the door.

"I will not lock the door," she said, "but I must be very careful that no one opens it. Standing here I can guard it. Now, then, for the solution of the mystery."

I did not reply. Cairns looked at her with intense curiosity. She was standing very erect, and those crimson spots which always visited her cheeks under stress of emotion became again visible.

"Yes," she said, meeting both our eyes without flinching, "I wonder what you think of me. It is true I did employ every fascination I had to draw Mr. Wilson on, and I did it with my father's sanction. I wanted to obtain something from him, and there was no other way. I have got what I want"—here she thrust her hand into her pocket and drew out the locket which Wilson had worn at his watch chain, and which contained the single brilliant star.

"He gave you that?" I cried. "Surely, surely you are not engaged to him?"

She did not answer for a moment, then she said slowly—

"I have paid a heavy price for this locket. Because of it I have told many lies; I have done more—I have consented to marry him. Yes, I consented last night; but"—here she gave a low laugh, a laugh almost of horror—"our marriage can never come off. Circumstances forbid."

"Tell us all," said Cairns suddenly.

"I will do so, and you must try to follow me. The plot is an intricate one." She paused for a moment; the locket lay on the table, her slim long hand covered it. "The plot in which my father was engaged is connected with the exposure of one of the biggest anarchist gangs in Europe, and the object of all our operations, which must have seemed so extraordinary to you, has been to obtain a key to their cypher, and at the same time to make them think that we had not obtained it, in order to quiet their suspicions and get them to despatch a certain communication from Plymouth to London which, if we can intercept, will put the whole gang into our hands."

"What do you mean, Miss Rutherford?" I interrupted.

"You must hear me to the end," she said. "It is needless to say that any cypher which such a gang would employ would be made with all their ingenuity, and be such that its key would be well nigh impossible to discover. Well, we have discovered it. Unlike any other cypher, this one has a human key."

"A what?" I cried.

"Yes," she repeated, "a human key. You know, perhaps, of the Bertillon system of identification of criminals so much used in Paris. On this principle by certain measurements one man out of fifty thousand can be identified, for it is well known that no two men have all the measurements of head and limbs alike. Now the cypher employed by this gang has been constructed on various measurements from the chief of the gang's body, such as the circumference of his skull and length of certain bones. These, in an order which I now hold, have been applied to a code and reveal the cypher as no other key can. It would take me too long to tell you how my father discovered this, but a few years ago he was thrown unexpectedly and by extraordinary circumstances into the company of the chief of the gang, and discovered by an accident that the principal measurements of his body and those of the chief correspond. This, as you will see, was a most important discovery. He mentioned the fact to the chief, who was then apparently his friend, and the gang know well that my father's body holds the key to the cypher. Hence their fixed determination to kill him if possible and have him buried at sea. The two men, Wilson and Sebright, came on board for the express purpose of murdering my father, but they quickly saw that it was unnecessary to kill a dying man. Nature did the work for them. Well, he was, as you know, buried at sea, and Messrs. Wilson and Sebright saw his body committed to the deep. They therefore now consider themselves absolutely safe, but they little guess the sequel which by my father's ingenuity is about to take place."

"But one question," I interrupted. "Why should not the measurements of your father's body have been taken before burial?"

"Because it is only the chief of the secret police in Paris who knows exactly which they are; it is to him, therefore, that the body must go."

"But surely, as I suggested, we could have brought the body home?" cried Cairns.

"Had you done so our purpose would not have been effected," replied Miss Rutherford, "because the two men on board would not have had their minds relieved; they would not have thought, as they now think, that

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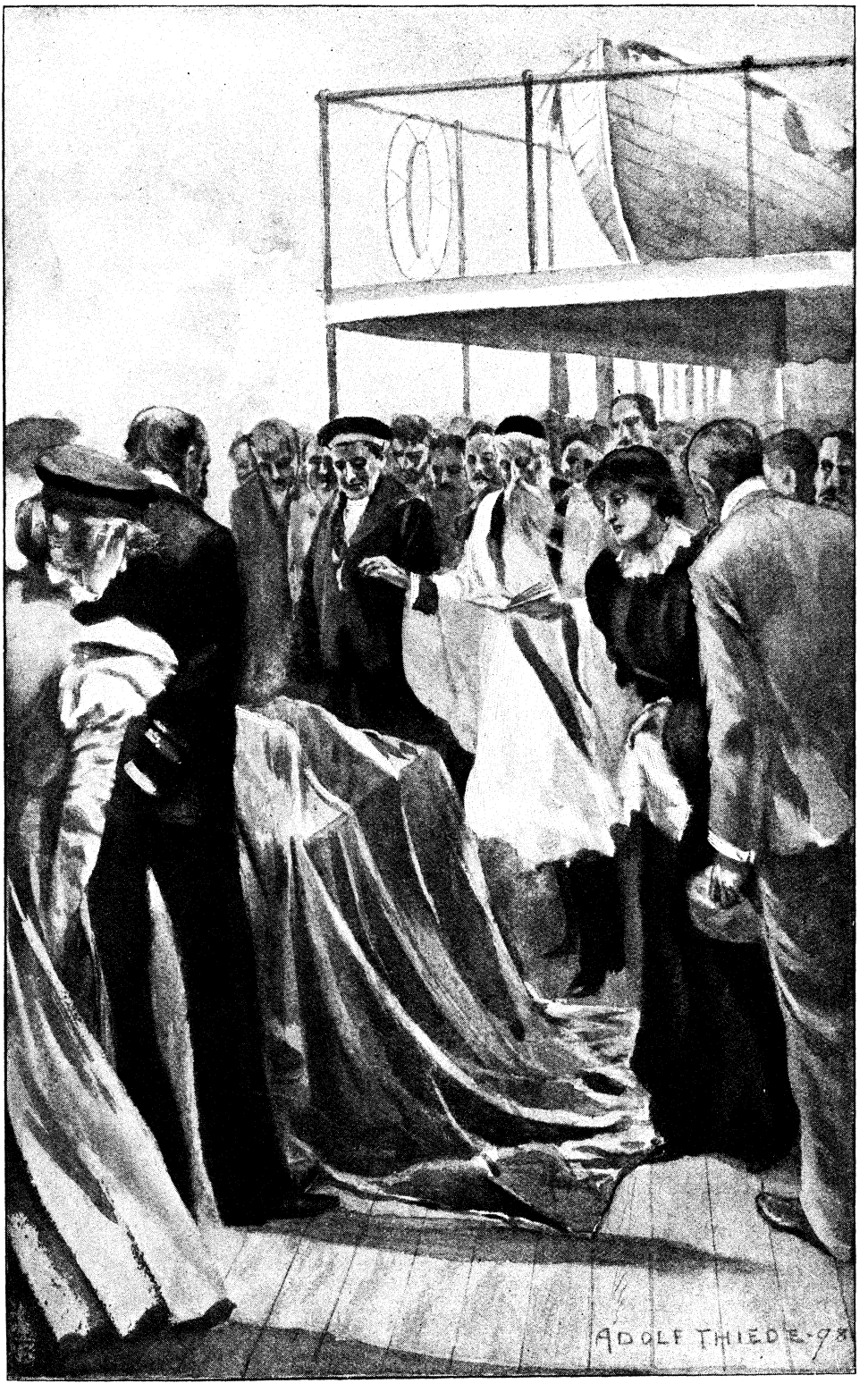

"'Saw his body committed to the deep.'"

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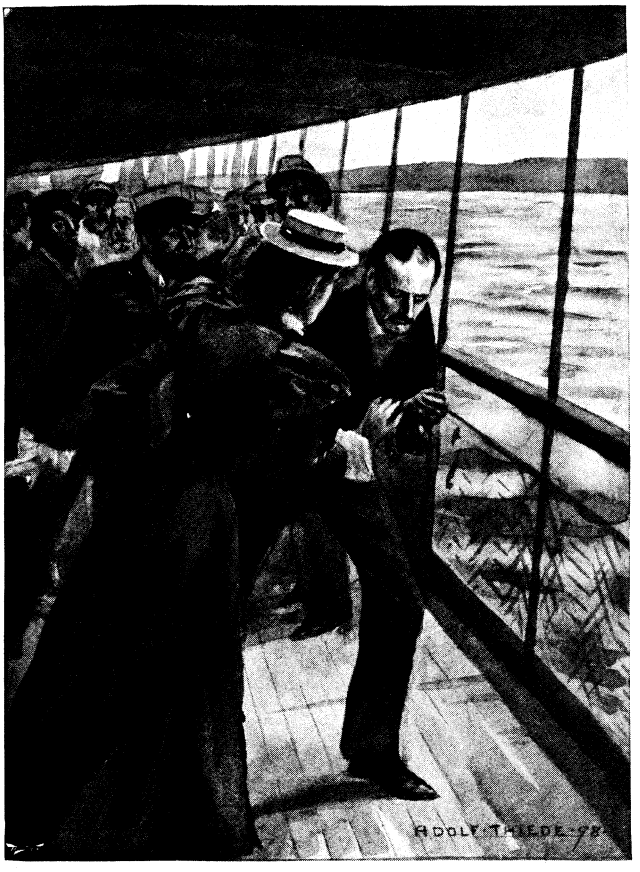
the key to the cypher is safe for ever, and would not despatch the telegram, which I believe Mr. Wilson has already written, to London. As soon as the ship touches Plymouth he means to send off this telegram. If he does so all our plans will be foiled." She paused, then slowly raising the locket held it on her palm. "I happen to know, and my father also knew, that, written in a very ordinary and simple cypher within this locket is the order of the measurements of my father's body, which it is necessary to know in order to read the key. When I promised to marry him last night Mr. Wilson gave me the locket. It was the price I required. He thought himself safe, believing that my father was buried for ever. Now listen: this is what is about to take place. As soon as we get into Plymouth harbour, and the tender comes out to meet the vessel, two detectives will step on board armed with a warrant for the arrest of Mr. Wilson and Mr. Sebright. Without the necessary signal from me they will do nothing. Mr. Wilson will have on his person the telegram which he is about to despatch to London. He will immediately be arrested and the telegram retained. Now you see what I mean. You perceive what I have struggled for—it has been worth the effort, yes, worth the effort."

Her face turned red, and then paled away to the most ghastly pallor. I knew what she was thinking of. She had lured Wilson to his own destruction as only a woman could. It was a desperate game, but she had not hesitated to play it. For a moment she stood before us absolutely silent, her eyes cast down, then she raised them.

"Don't judge me too harshly," she said; "any means are justifiable to obtain such an end. What is the blackening of one woman's character compared to the awful issues which would have followed the letting of those scoundrels free? My father and I devised the whole plan and worked it hand in hand—aye, even though he is dead, we still work this matter hand in hand."



"Sebright tried to leap overboard."

Tears for the first time since her father's death sprang to her eyes, she trembled, then covered her face with her hands.

Cairns looked at her with intense compassion, but we were both silent. For my part I was fitting the various complex pieces of this masterpiece of detection together. At last I spoke.

"Miss Rutherford, you are a wonderful woman. Few would have played the part you have played so bravely; but are you quite certain that that locket gives you the further clue you want?"

"Yes; all is now complete. In less than an hour you shall see the fruit of my father's labours and mine. Be near me, I beg of you both, when the tender comes alongside."

We both promised; she opened the door of the state-cabin and we went out.

We were now drawing in slowly towards the harbour, and the tender bringing the Channel pilot came up alongside. I noticed

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that Wilson was standing watching it. He held in his hand a small roll of paper. Directly the gangway was down, Vernon, one of the harbour detectives, accompanied by another man, sprang on board. Vernon hurried towards us.

"Is there a Mr. Rutherford here?" he asked.

Before I could reply Miss Rutherford herself approached. I now noticed that she stood in such a position as to put the gangway between herself and Wilson. He was standing within a foot of her, his eyes devouring her face. She gave him a quick glance, then turned to the detective.

"Mr. Vernon," she said, "my father is dead, but you have your instructions. These are the gentlemen. Do your duty."

With a sweep of her hand she indicated Sebright and Wilson. The detective gave one of those faint smiles which showed a keen relish for the work on hand. He glanced at his confederate, who came up quickly. In an instant handcuffs were placed on the wrists of Wilson and Sebright, and Wilson's roll of paper was transferred with the deftness and quickness of legerdemain to Vernon's pocket.

"What is the meaning of this?" said Wilson, when he could find his voice. "Miss Rutherford, Miss Rutherford, are you mad? Why are we both subjected to this indignity? Loose me, sir, at once; you mistake us for some other men."

"Your names are in this warrant," replied Vernon, in the coolest of tones. "You are arrested on suspicion of conspiracy against the Government, and must come with me. The less you say, the better for yourselves."

"You have no case against us," said Wilson. He looked full into the detective's face.

The passengers had now come clustering round in the greatest excitement.

"Ask Miss Rutherford," was Vernon's unexpected response.

She drew back for an instant, then she went boldly forward.

"I played my part, and I have succeeded," she said. "When you gave me that locket, Mr. Wilson, you fitted the last link into a necessary chain of evidence against you. You are a clever man, but a woman's wits, joined to those of a dying man, have won the victory. You little thought when I allowed you to make love to me, that I was playing a part as deep, as daring, as desperate as your own. I have won and you have lost. The contents of that fatal telegram shall never reach their destination. Mr. Vernon will see to that."

Here Wilson burst into a high, excited laugh. He glanced at Sebright, who muttered something. I caught the words—"fooled by a woman—I told you so."

"I do not know what you mean, Miss Rutherford," said Wilson; "you must have taken leave of your senses. As to you," he said, turning to the detective, "the telegram which you have wrested from my grasp is of no value whatever."

"You think that, because you believe that the key to the cypher is lost," continued Miss Rutherford, "but you are mistaken; the key is forthcoming. You know well that my father's body holds the key. The measurements of my father's body are the same measurements as those of the chief of your gang; you both know it, sirs. You believe that my father's body is now lying at the bottom of the Bitter Lake."

"We saw it buried; there is no doubt with regard to that," replied Sebright.

"Yes, but you did not see what took place afterwards. The sea has given up its dead; my father's body will be in England in three days from now."

Sebright's face turned very white.

"This is witchcraft," he cried. "Wilson, don't listen to a word the miserable girl says."

"And," continued Miss Rutherford, "the numbers of the measurements are contained in this locket. I know all. You have failed, we have won."

"Come, come," said Vernon, "time will prove whether the young lady is right or not; but I have no time to spare, you are both arrested and must come with me. The less you say, the better for your safety."

With a wild cry, as if suddenly roused to the peril of the situation, Sebright now made a lurch forward and tried to leap overboard, but Miss Rutherford herself interposed.

"Your game is up," she said, "go quietly. My father did not die in vain; it is useless to resist."

"Aye, the lady says the truth," echoed Vernon. "Come, no more struggling, please."

A moment later the two men were on board the tender.

On reaching London that afternoon we found the town ringing with the news of the capture of the entire gang of anarchists. Few knew, however, through what byways that capture had been effected.

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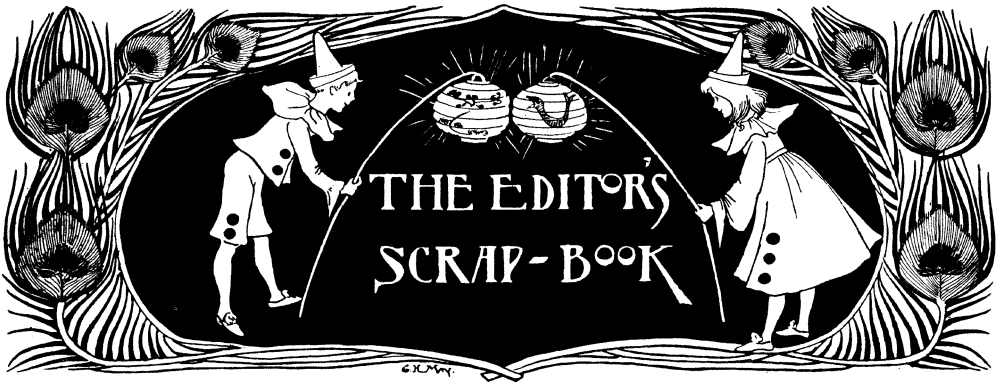


MAUD: Did I ever tell you how George came to lose his heart to me?

ETHEL: No; I understood it was because he lost his head.

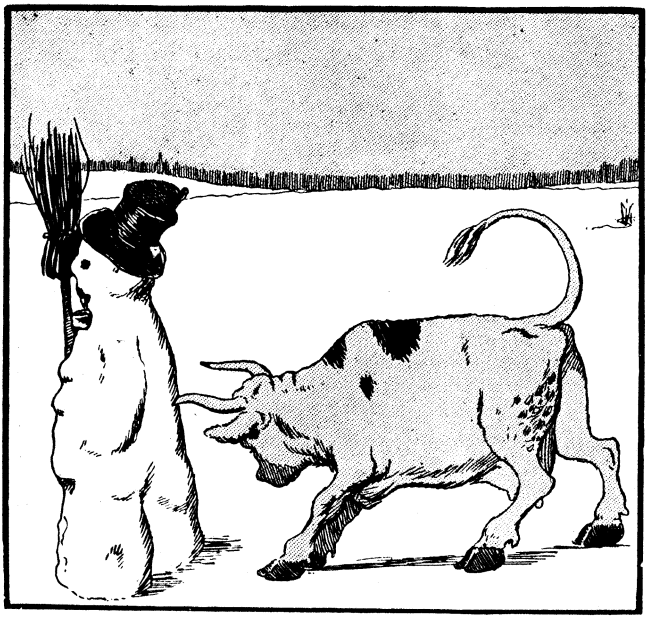
JONES: What is the trouble here, Jenkins? Everybody in your office looks as blue as indigo. Is business bad?

JENKINS: Business is all right, but the typewriter is going to leave.

"I AM to be married on the 16th," said Maud.

"To whom?"

"I don't know. Harry wants me to elope with *him*, but I am engaged to George."



THE CENTAUR UP-TO-DATE: A STEALTHY ATTACK.

IT is related of the late Dr. Hodge, of Princeton Theological Seminary, that he once asked a student for a definition of eternity. The student, after some hesitation, replied that he used to know the definition, but had forgotten it. "Oh, my, my, my!" exclaimed Dr. Hodge, bringing his hand down forcibly upon the table. "What a calamity! The only man in the universe who ever knew what eternity is has forgotten."

TEACHER: From what animal do we get our milk?

FLOSSIE: From the milkman.

HE: Reggy Fitzjames has become recklessly engaged to any number of girls, but he always gets out of it.

SHE: With dignity?

He: Oh, yes; he merely has to go and ask their father's consent, and it's all over.

GLADYS: Oh, Uncle Rufus, do look at these tadpoles in this pool; and to think that some day all those horrid, wriggling things will be butterflies!

THE editor of a small paper in a remote part of South California found himself on one occasion unable to insert his usual column of "Births, Marriages, and Deaths." Thinking that some apology was needed for such an untoward circumstance, he inserted the following in clear black type: "We regret that owing to pressure upon our space, several deaths have been inevitably postponed."

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"I THOUGHT Miss De Vere was very particular. I should think you would wear a frock coat when you call upon her?"

"You wouldn't if you saw the frock coat."

ENGLISH TOURIST (to Scottish shepherd): Very quiet place this, my man!

SHEPHERD: Ou, ay!

TOURIST: Does a newpaper ever find its way here?

SHEPHERD: Whiles!

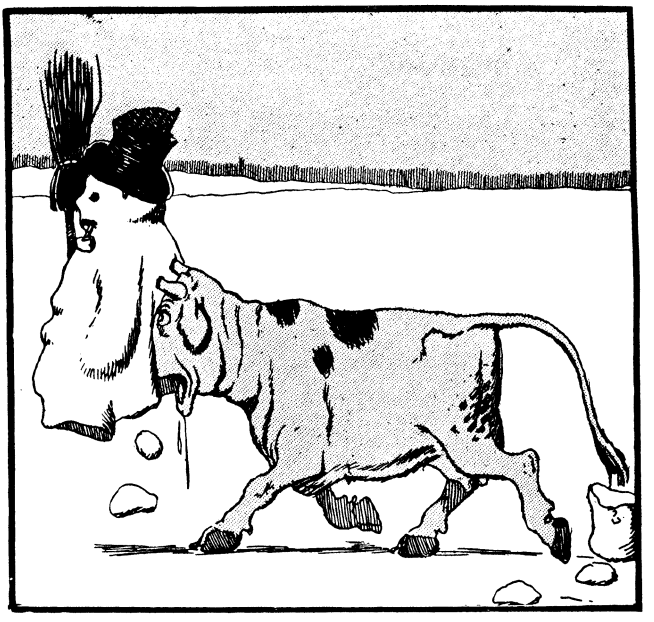
TOURIST: You'll never hear anything, I suppose, of what is going on in London?

SHEPHERD: Naething! But then, you see, they hear naething in London aboot what's goin' on here!

EVERY dog has his day, and every other dog thinks how much nicer it is than his day.

TOMPKINS: I say, my good fellow, what would be the penalty if I should shoot a deer out of season.

GAMEKEEPER: There wouldn't be *no* penalty in your case, sir—everybody would know it was an accident.



MORE THAN HE BARGAINED FOR.

HE: What does your father see in me to object to?

SHE: He doesn't see anything; that is why he objects.

CHAPMAN: What do you consider is the chief objection to the Sunday papers?

CHIPMAN: Why, the papers themselves!

TABLEAU!

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THE DESTROYING ANGEL.

By Carl Smith.

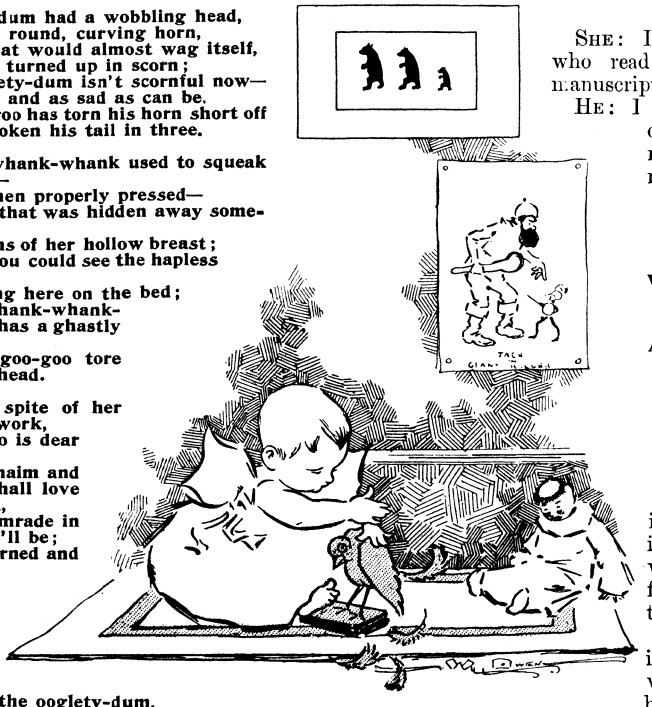
Oh, the whufiy-duff was the prettiest bird
That a toy shop ever knew,
With a great, long tail and with goose-quill wings
And a glass eye good and true;
But his wings are gone and his tail's pulled out,
And his head is twisted awry,
For the goo-goo has torn him limb from limb,
And has swallowed the whufiy-duff's eye.

The ooglety-dum had a wobbling head,
And a nice, round, curving horn,
And a tail that would almost wag itself,
And a nose turned up in scorn;
But the ooglety-dum isn't scornful now—
He is meek and as sad as can be.
For the goo-goo has torn his horn short off
And has broken his tail in three.

The whank-whank-whank used to squeak her joy—
That is, when properly pressed—
With a voice that was hidden away somewhere
In the depths of her hollow breast;
But I wish you could see the hapless corpse
That is lying here on the bed;
Oh, the whank-whank-whank has a ghastly look
Since the goo-goo tore off her head.

And yet, in spite of her deadly work,
The goo-goo is dear to me;
Though she maim and kill I shall love her still,
And her comrade in crime I'll be;
For when I turned and looked just now
Where she lay in her trundle-bed,
She reached me the wreck of the ooglety-dum,
And "Dada" is what she said.

From "The Ladies' Home Journal," Philadelphia.



"WHAT is your idea of a patriot?"

"Well—a patriot is a man who wouldn't give up a good Government job in his own country for a good Government job in any other country."

FRIEND (arrived on a visit): So you have settled down here as the spiritual physician of this little community?

THE COUNTRY MINISTER: Yes; but a great many of my patients apparently do not intend to pay until cured.

LOCAL press notice of an amateur operatic performance: "The worst is over. The Barchester-cum-Slowby amateurs accomplished their fiendish purpose and gave *Il Trovatore* last night."

WELL-MEANING STRANGER: Say, there's a farmer down that road who wants to hire men to help him thresh wheat.

TRAMP (gratefully): Thankee, sir! thankee! I might have gone down that way, accidental like; but now I kin avoid the locality.

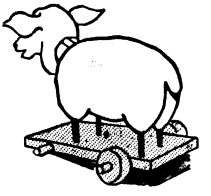
SHE: I don't like preachers who read their sermons from manuscript.

HE: I do. If a man writes out his sermons he is much more likely to realise their length.

We often hear of "mother tongue,"
But not a thing is heard
About the "father tongue," because
He can't get in a word.

MRS. JONES: The idea! Here is a story in the paper about a woman suing for £2,000 for the loss of only a thumb.

MR. JONES: Perhaps it was the thumb under which she kept her husband.



"AND why," asked the young porker, "do you feel so sad whenever you see a hen?"

"My son," replied the old pig, "I cannot help thinking of ham-and-eggs."

HOPEFUL AUTHOR'S WIFE: Frank, dear, don't you think we ought to provide for the remote future? What would become of me if anything were to happen to you? Oughtn't you to insure your life?

HOPEFUL AUTHOR: Remote future? Insure my life? Why I've got more than fifty manuscripts accepted by "pay on publication" periodicals.

CALLER: Nellie, is your mother in?

NELLIE: Mother is out shopping.

CALLER: When will she return, Nellie?

NELLIE (calling back): Mamma, what shall I say now?

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A Leap for Life.

From the Picture by Lucy E. Kemp-Welch.

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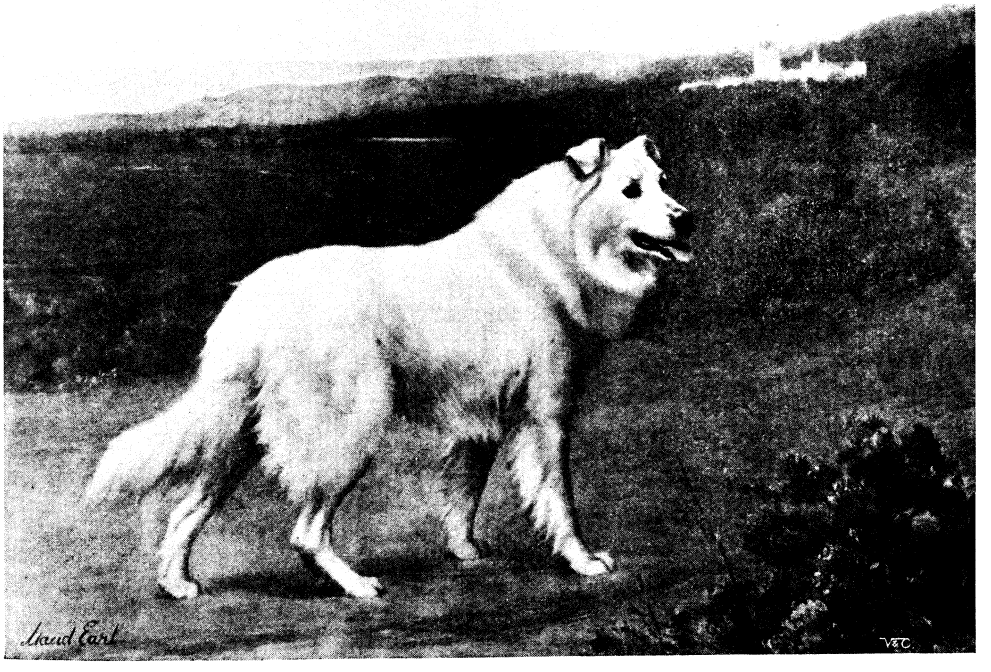
WOMEN ARTISTS OF THE DAY:

I.—MISS MAUD EARL, MRS. JOPLING-ROWE, MISS BLANCHE JENKINS, MISS MARGARET DICKSEE, AND MISS LUCY KEMP-WELCH.

EVEN those who are genuinely sceptical about the progress of women, of which we hear so much to-day, must admit that, during the last fifty years of this century, there has not only been a real development of artistic faculties amongst women, but also the birth of artistic powers of which no sign has been given at an earlier period of history. No one who is conversant with the facts will even now claim that there has been born into the world a feminine Raphael or Titian, or that, so far, there has appeared any woman painter of genius; but it is not the less true that at the present moment we have a body of female artists whose work shows as high a degree of excellence in different provinces of art as the majority of their brothers of the brush. It would be safe to offer even higher praise, and ask whether any male painter can surpass Miss Maud Earl's faithful and spirited delineations of dogs. Miss Maud Earl, the descendant of a family of artists—for her grandfather and her father George Earl were both well-known animal painters—owes very little to the teaching of any school, and her talent is wholly natural and inherited. Her first picture accepted by the Royal Academy, in 1884, when she was little more than a girl, was called "Early Morning," and depicted two stags in a mist. Since then she has almost wholly devoted her talents to the portrayal of dogs, and since Landseer there has probably been no painter who has given us so many diverse and excellent representations of dogs in their varying characteristics and aspects. Miss Earl's striking success in the portrayal of dogs is due in a great measure to her remarkable and accurate knowledge of the natural history of these animals. She is an expert in dog-knowledge, knows every point and quality of the different breeds, and believes that unless a painter possesses that knowledge, it is wholly impossible to render those small and



THE QUEEN'S WHITE COLLIE, "SNOWBALL."—BY MISS MAUD EARL.

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often subtle characteristics which give each its unmistakable individuality, if one may use this expression in connection with animals.

Owners of champion dogs constantly seek Miss Earl's services in immortalising their favourites, and at the painter's studio in Bloomfield Place there may be seen from time to time one or other of the famous animals that have won a reputation through sporting England. Mr. Brough's famous bloodhounds, including the champion "Barbarossa," with his royal head, have been amongst Miss Earl's sitters, it is needless to say under protest, and only restrained from tearing out of the room by the strong leash in which they were held. Many members of the Royal Family have taken advantage of Miss Earl's success in portraiture to have likenesses of their pets; and "Snowball," the Queen's white collie, and "Bonnet" and "Vivian," Basset-hounds belonging to the Prince and Princess of Wales, may be specially named as capital illustrations of the spontaneity and force and living reality which characterise Miss Earl's best work. Not a few of the dogs painted by this artist have an historical interest, notably the two depicted in the picture called "The Last of the Expedition." The gaunt, famished animals are portraits of the two survivors of Lieut. Peary's Expedition, wild Esquimaux dogs with very thick coats.

Another name well known in modern picture galleries is that of Mrs. Jopling-Rowe, whose courage in the thorny path of art has met with the success it deserves. From her versatile brush the public have had a number of capital portraits of well-known personages, amongst whom one remembers those of Miss Ellen Terry and Miss Genevieve Ward, and many pleasing and graceful pictures. One of the best was "Saturday Night," in which an ordinary incident of lower class life, the starved-looking wife and children searching in the public-house for the drunken breadwinner, was treated with feeling and intensity. But

MISS MAUD EARL'S STUDIO.

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"BAFFLED!" INCLUDING BLOODHOUND CHAMPIONS "BARBAROSSA" AND "BOSCOBEL," THE PROPERTY OF MR. EDWIN BROUGH.

From the Picture by Miss Maud Earl.

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FIVE O'CLOCK TEA.

By Louise Jopling-Rowe.

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many of Mrs. Jopling-Rowe's admirers consider that her talents are best employed, not in the representation of strong emotions, but in agreeable, attractive pictures of beautiful, graceful girls, with stately figures and adorable heads, decorated with waving ribbons or severe classic fillets. Such a picture is the charming one that appeared a few years ago under the title of "Blue and White," the diaphonous white robes of the maidens and the blue china making up a delightful colour harmony.

Miss Blanche Jenkins has made for herself a reputation as a painter of charming children. Miss Jenkins' passionate admiration for Sir Joshua Reynolds has made her a zealous student of that great master's art. She has more than once reminded us of the lovely, irresistible innocence which pervades his children's faces. The influence of Millais is still more visible, and in one instance—the portrait of a sweet, ruddy-cheeked little girl, whose face shines forth under a large hat, garlanded with buttercups—Miss Jenkins has caught the unmistakable charm that stamped Millais' best child-portraits. This is not intended to imply that Miss Jenkins has not

MRS. JOPLING-ROWE.
Photo by Russell & Sons, Baker Street.

A LAST LOOK AT THE OLD HOME.—BY LOUISE JOPLING-ROWE.

an individuality of her own, which reveals itself in the delineation of happy-eyed children. That wistful, almost melancholy expression which is so often to be found in the faces of Millais' lovely children, rarely, if ever, appears in the countenances of Miss Jenkins' youthful sitters, and for joyous, fresh, natural little people, with bright hair and eyes and an air that is unspeakably English, we know of no modern artist who has excelled Miss Jenkins in variety and quality.

Miss Jenkins is a most diligent worker. She began exhibiting at the Royal Academy before she had completed her student course at the Royal Academy School, and since then no less than forty of her canvases have hung upon the walls of Burlington House. Her first great success, exhibited in 1882, was called "The First Kiss," and had the honour of being engraved by Mr. Barlow, R.A., whose property it became. Another very popular picture was called "Hush," and has become familiar to most of us through its subsequent reproduction in the *Graphic*. It is encouraging to learn that portrait painting in the hands of so able an artist as Miss Jenkins is a profitable form of art, involving, if her numerous commissions are to be punctually executed, incessant industry. She has kindly permitted us to

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MISS BLANCHE JENKINS.
Photo by Barraud, Oxford Street.

MISS MARGARET DICKSEE.
From a photo.

reproduce one of her most attractive pictures of children. Miss Jenkins has a favourite little model who haunts her studio with great persistency, and is entranced to be allowed to sit and listen to her seductive fairy tales.

The name of Miss Margaret Dicksee, daughter and sister of well-known artists, is so familiar to frequenters of modern picture galleries that the accompanying photograph of her first success will be examined with great interest. It was painted soon after Miss Dicksee had completed her training at the Academy, where she carried off the silver medal for a cartoon, and an award of £40 for a design from a painting in fresco, which appeared at Burlington House under the title of "Deepening Shadows." The *motif* of the picture, which is pervaded by a soft and tender sadness, was suggested to Miss Dicksee by the pathetic incident in the "Old Curiosity Shop," where the old schoolmaster visits his sick little pupil, and, as he sits by the bedside in the stealing twilight, hears the happy voices of children outside. This sweet little picture was bought by Mr. Brett, R.A., and

DEEPENING SHADOWS.—BY MARGARET DICKSEE.

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ETHEL, DAUGHTER OF MR. HERBERT D. COHEN.—BY BLANCHE JENKINS.

was the beginning of a series of successful pictures, amongst which "Light in Darkness" and "The Child Handel," depicting a true scene in the life of the musician's childhood, have been exceedingly popular. Subjects with a dramatic and historic incident have a great fascination for Miss Dicksee, and most of her pictures represent a real event or personage. One of her most recent pictures, in which Swift is teaching the child Stella how to write, portrays a passage to be found in "Stella's Own Journal." This picture, which reaches a high degree of artistic excellence, is dramatic without being theatrical.

The concluding member of our present circle of women artists is Miss Lucy Kemp-Welch, whose success has been phenomenal,

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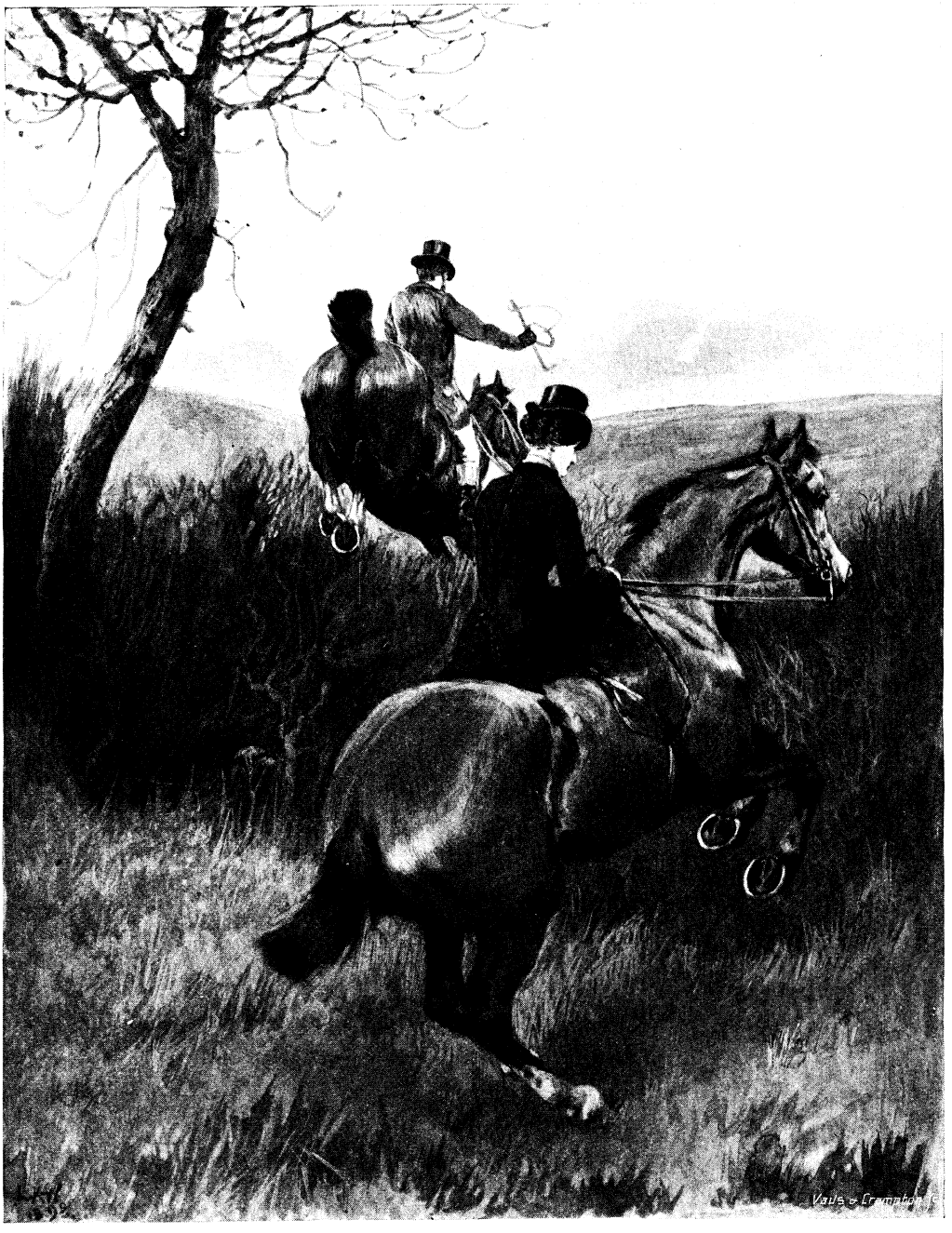

ONE OF MISS LUCY KEMP-WELCH'S DRAWINGS FOR "SATANELLA," IN THE NEW ILLUSTRATED EDITION OF WHYTE-MELVILLE'S NOVELS.

Miss Kemp-Welch is one of the group of artists who are contributing the illustrations to the handsome new edition of Major G. J. Whyte-Melville's ever-popular sporting novels and old-world romances, now being re-issued in monthly volumes. Miss Kemp-Welch's spirited treatment of the author's incidents in the several novels allotted to her brush places her drawings among the happiest illustrations of the hunting-field, and of open-air life in general, that have appeared of late years.

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and who is still so young that her future achievements may give her a place never hitherto reached by a woman. Miss Kemp-Welch passed her early years at Bournemouth, and as a child, "without," as she says herself, "in the least knowing how to paint," was hardly ever without a pencil in her hands, animals being then, as now, her favourite study. "Later on," she says, "I studied the form and drawing of horses as though life depended upon it; and though I studied the anatomy of horses at an infirmary, I did not know how to paint until, in 1892, I came to Bushey and Professor Herkomer became my master."

How much Miss Kemp-Welch owes to her teacher it is impossible to say, but no one who has carefully studied her masterly painting of horses can doubt that her genius in this kind of painting would have found its adequate expression, no matter what art training she received, although no doubt it has been directed by Professor Herkomer into its right channel, and consequently spared the young artist the years of mistakes and disappointment that are often the lot of gifted immature power. The almost unparalleled success that has been achieved by her is shown in the purchase of her fine picture, "Colt Hunting," by the Chantrey Bequest last year, an honour accompanied by a handsome sum that is very rarely won by an artist of the age of Miss Kemp-Welch. "The Call to Arms" represents a hasty preparation for an engagement in the Wars of the Roses, the locality being the New Forest. The fine drawing of the horses, the sense of movement and stir, and the completeness of the picture, so difficult to preserve when there are living figures actively engaged in diverse ways, are qualities that have scarcely ever characterised the art of women, and that open out a promise for the future which will give female artists a pre-eminence in one highly important and successful department of painting.

MISS LUCY E. KEMP-WELCH.
Photo by London Stereoscopic Co.

FRANCES LOW.

THE CALL TO ARMS—FROM THE PAINTING BY LUCY E. KEMP-WELCH.

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STALKY & CO.

By RUDYARD KIPLING.*

Illustrated by L. Raven Hill.

No. III.—THE IMPRESSIONISTS.

THEY had dropped into the Chaplain's study for a Saturday night smoke—all four house-masters—and the three briars and the one cigar reeking in amity proved the Rev. John Gillett's good generalship. Since the discovery of the cat, King had been too ready to see affront where none was meant, and the Reverend John, buffer-state and general confidant, had worked for a week to bring about a good understanding. He was fat, clean-shaven, except for a big moustache, of an imperturbable good temper, and, those who loved him least said, a guileful Jesuit. He smiled benignantly upon his handiwork—four sorely tried men talking without very much malice.

"Now, remember," he said, when the conversation turned that way, "I impute nothing. But every time anyone has taken direct steps against Number Five study, the issue has been more or less humilating to the taker."

"I can't admit that. I pulverise the egregious Beetle daily for his soul's good, and the others with him," said King.

"Well, take your own case, King, and go back a couple of years. Do you remember when Prout and you were on their track for hutting and trespass, wasn't it? Have you forgotten Colonel Dabney"?

The others laughed. King did not care to be reminded of his career as a poacher.

"That was one instance. Again, when you had rooms below them—I always said that that was entering the lion's den—you turned them out."

"For making disgusting noises. Surely, Gillett, you don't excuse——"

"All I say is that you turned them out. That same evening your study was wrecked."

"By Rabbits' Eggs—most beastly drunk—from the road," said King. "What has that——"

The Reverend John went on.

"Lastly, they conceive that aspersions are cast upon their personal cleanliness—a most delicate matter with all boys. Ve-ry good. Observe how, in each case, the punishment fits the crime. A week after your house calls them stinkers, King, your house is, not to put too fine a point on it, stunk out by a dead cat who chooses to die in the one spot where she can annoy you most. Again the long arm of coincidence! *Summa.* You accuse them of trespass. Through some absurd chain of circumstances—they may or may not be at the other end of it—you and Prout are made to appear as trespassers. You evict them. For a time your study is made untenable. I have drawn the parallel in the last case. Well?"

"She was under the centre of White's dormitory," said King. "There are double floor-boards there to deaden noise. No boy, even in my own house, could possibly have pried up the boards without leaving some trace . . . and Rabbits' Eggs was phenomenally drunk that other night."

"They are singularly favoured by fortune. That is all I ever said. Personally, I like them immensely and I believe I have a little of their confidence. I confess I like being called 'Padre.' They are at peace with me; consequently I am not treated to bogus confessions of theft."

"You mean Mason's case?" said Prout heavily. "That always struck me as peculiarly scandalous. I thought the Head should have taken up the matter more thoroughly. Mason may be misguided, but at least he is thoroughly sincere and means well."

"I confess I cannot agree with you, Prout,"

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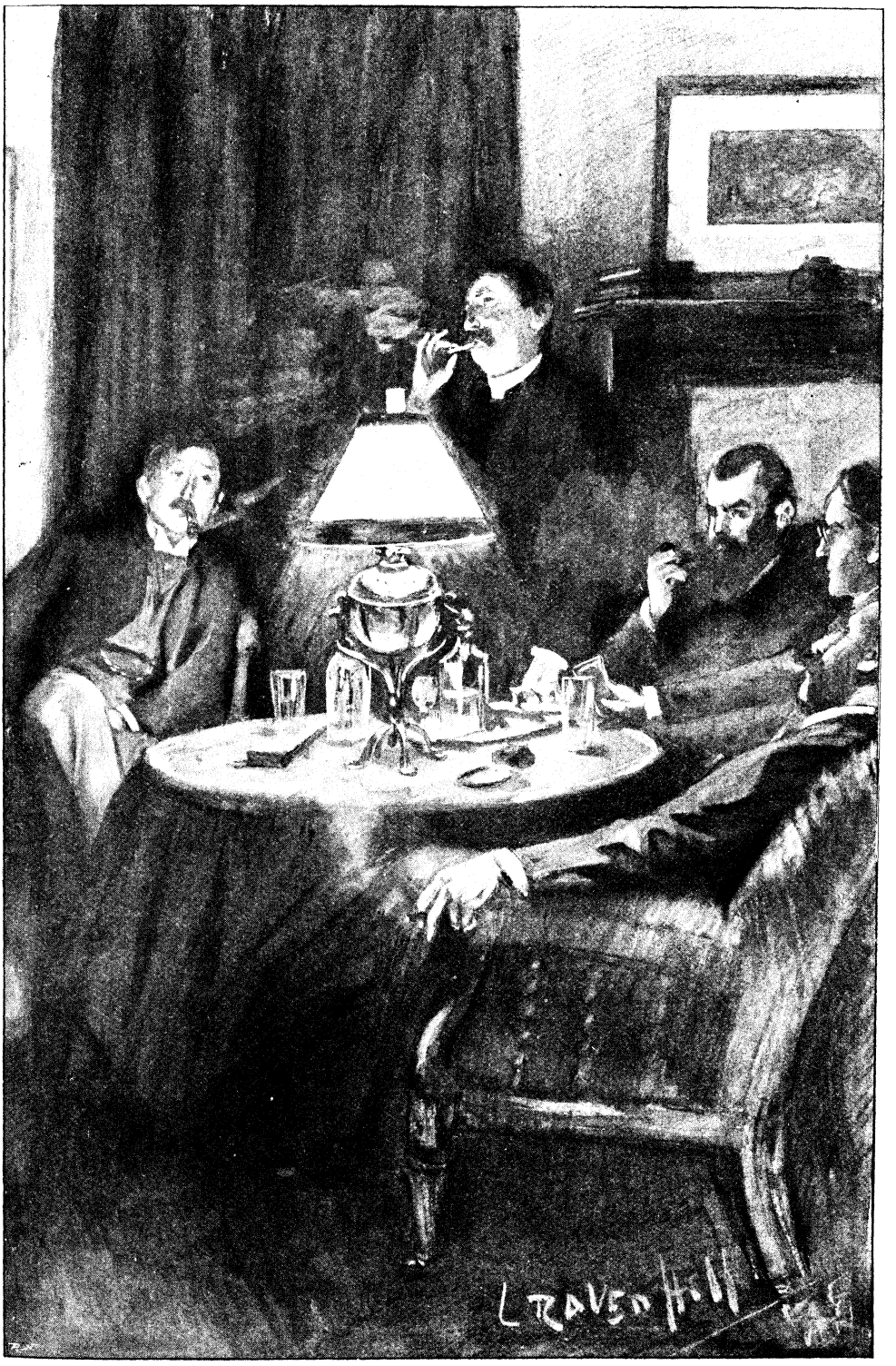

"They had dropped into the Chaplain's study."

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said the Reverend John. "He jumped at some silly tale of theft on their part; accepted another boy's evidence without, so far as I can see, any inquiry, and—frankly I think he deserved all he got."

"They deliberately outraged Mason's best feelings," said Prout. "A word to me on their part would have saved the whole thing. But they preferred to lure him on; to play on his ignorance of their characters——"

"That may be," said King, "but I don't like Mason. I may say I dislike him for the very reason that Prout advances to his credit. He means well."

"Our criminal tradition is not theft—among ourselves, at least," said little Hartopp.

"For the head of a house that raided seven head of cattle from the innocent pot-wallopers of Northam, isn't that rather a sweeping statement?" * said Macrea.

"Precisely so," said Hartopp, unabashed. "That, with gate-lifting, and a little poaching and egg-hunting on the cliffs, is our salvation."

"It does us far more harm as a school——" Prout began.

"Than any hushed-up scandal could? Quite so. Our reputation among the farmers is most unsavoury. But I would much sooner deal with any amount of ingenious crime of that nature than—some other offences."

"They may be all right, but they are unboylike, abnormal, and, in my opinion, unsound," Prout insisted. "The moral effect of their performances must pave the way for greater harm. It makes me doubtful how to deal with them. I might separate them."

"You might, of course; but they have gone up the school together for six years. *I* shouldn't care to do it," said Macrea.

"They use the editorial 'we,'" said King irrelevantly, "It annoys me. 'Where's your prose, Stalky?' 'Well, sir, we haven't quite done it yet.' 'We'll bring it in a minute,' and so on. And the same with the others."

"There's great virtue in that 'we,'" said little Hartopp. "You know I take them for trig. McTurk may have some conception of the meaning of things, but Beetle is as the brutes that perish about sines and cosines. He copies from Stalky, who positively rejoices in mathematics."

"Why don't you stop it?" said Prout.

"It rights itself at the exams. Then Beetle shows up blank sheets, and trusts to his 'English' to save him from a fall. I fancy he spends most of his time with me in writing verse."

"I wish to Heaven he would transfer a little of his energy in that direction to Elegiacs." King jerked himself upright. "He is, with the single exception of Stalky, the very vilest manufacturer of 'barbarous hexameters' that I have ever dealt with."

"The work is pooled in that study," said the Chaplain. "Stalky does the Mathematics, McTurk the Latin, and Beetle attends to their English and French. At least, when he was in the sick-house last month——"

"Malingering," Prout interjected.

"Quite possibly. I found a very distinct falling off in their 'Roman d'un jeune Homme Pauvre' translations."

"I think it is profoundly immoral," said Prout. "I've always been opposed to the study system."

"It would be hard to find any study where they don't help each other, but in Number Five the thing has probably been reduced to a system," said little Hartopp. "They have a system in most things."

"They confess as much," said the Reverend John. "I've seen McTurk being hounded up the stairs to elegise the 'Elegy in a Churchyard,' while Stalky and Beetle went to punt about."

"It comes to systematic cribbing," said Prout, his voice growing deeper and deeper.

"No such thing," little Hartopp returned. "You can't teach a cow the violin."

"In intention it is cribbing."

"But we spoke under the seal of the confessional, didn't we?" said the Reverend John.

"You say you've heard them arranging their work in this way, Gillett," Prout persisted.

"Good Heavens! Don't make *me* Queen's evidence, my dear fellow. Hartopp is equally incriminated. If they ever found out that I had sneaked, our relations would suffer—and I value them."

"I think your attitude in this matter is weak," said Prout, looking round for support. "It would be really better to break up the study—for awhile—wouldn't it?"

"Oh, break it up by all means," said Macrae. "We shall see then if Gillett's theory holds water."

"Be wise, Prout. Leave them alone or calamity will overtake you, and what is much more important, they will be annoyed with me. I am too fat, alas! to be worried by bad boys. Where are you going?"

* *Vide* "Stalky."

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"Nonsense! They would not dare . . . but I am going to think this out," said Prout. "It needs thought. In intention they cribbed, and I must think out my duty."

"He's perfectly capable of putting the boys on their honour. It's *I* that am a fool." The Reverend John looked round remorsefully. "Never again will I forget that a master is not a man. Mark my words," said the Reverend John. "There will be trouble."

* * * * *

But by the yellow Tiber
Was tumult and affright.

Out of the blue sky (they were still rejoicing over the cat-war) Mr. Prout dropped into Number Five; read them a stiff lecture on the enormity of cribbing, and bade them return to the form-rooms on Monday. They had raged, solo and chorus, all through the peaceful Sabbath, for their sin was more or less the daily practice of all the studies.

"What's the good of cursing?" said Stalky. "We're all in the same boat. We've got to go back and consort with the house. A locker in the form-room, and a seat at prep. in Number Twelve." (He looked regretfully round the cosy study which McTurk, sole arbiter on taste, had decorated with a dado, a stencil and cretonne hangings.)

"Yes! Heffy lurchin' into the form-rooms like a frouzy old retriever to see if we aren't up to something. You know he never leaves his house alone, these days," said McTurk. "Oh, it will be giddy."

"Why aren't you down watchin' cricket? I like a robust, healthy boy. You mustn't frowst in a form-room. Why don't you take an interest in your house. Yah!" said Beetle.

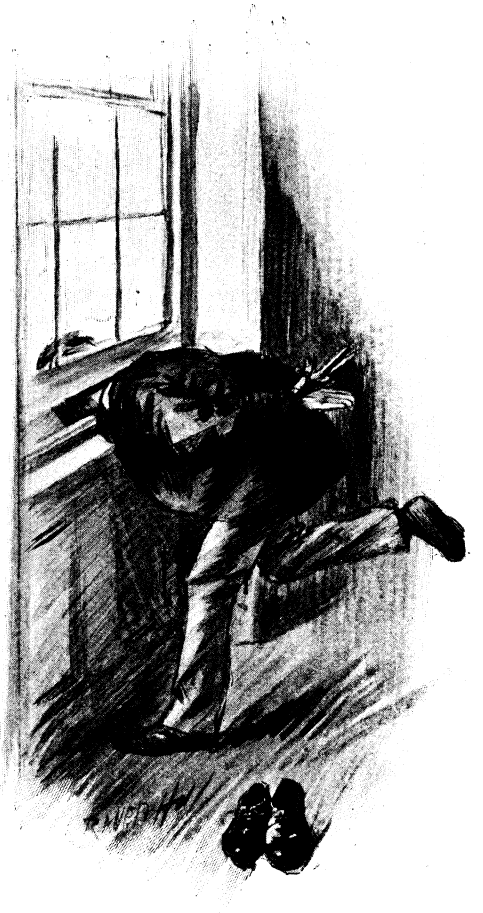
"Yes, why don't we?" said Stalky, suddenly. "Let's! *We*'ll take an interest in the house. We'll take no end of interest in the house. He hasn't had us in the form-rooms for a year. We've learned a lot since then. Oh, we'll make it a be-autiful house before we've done. 'Member that chap in 'Eric' or 'St. Winifred's'—Belial somebody? I'm goin' to be Belial," said Stalky, with an ensnaring grin.

"Right O," said Beetle, "and I'll be Mammon. I'll lend money at usury—that's what they do in the B.O.P. Penny a week on a shillin'. That'll startle Heffy's weak intellect. You be Lucifer, Turkey."

"What have I got to do?" McTurk also smiled.

"Head conspiracies—and cabals—and boycots. Go in for that stealthy intrigue that Heffy is always talkin' about. Come on!"

The house received them on their fall with the mixture of jest and sympathy always extended to boys turned out of their study. The known aloofness of the three made them more interesting.



"Guillotined."

"Quite like old times, ain't it!" Stalky selected a locker and flung in his books. "We've come to sport with you, my young friends, for awhile, because our beloved house-master has hove us out of our diggin's."

"Serve you jolly well right," said Orrin, "you cribbers!"

"This will never do," said Stalky. "We can't maintain our giddy prestige, Orrin dear, if you make these remarks."

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"'Rescue, Kings! Kings! Kings!'"

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They wrapped themselves lovingly about the boy, thrust him to the opened window, and drew down the sash to the nape of his neck. With an equal swiftness they tied his thumbs together behind his back with a piece of twine, and then, because he kicked furiously, removed his shoes.

There Mr. Prout happened to find him a few minutes later, guillotined and helpless, surrounded by a convulsed crowd who would not assist.

Stalky, in an upper form-room, had gathered himself allies against the vengeance. Orrin presently tore up at the head of a boarding party, and the form-room grew one fog of dust through which boys wrestled, stamped, shouted and yelled. A desk carried away in the tumult, a knot of warriors reeled into and split a door panel, a window was broken, and a gas-jet fell. Under cover of the confusion the three escaped to the corridor, whence they called in and sent up passers-by to the fray.

"Rescue, Kings! Kings! Kings! Number Twelve form-room! Rescue, Prouts—Prouts! Rescue, Ma-Creaaa! Rescue, Hartopps!"

The juniors hurried out like bees aswarm, asking no questions, clattered up the staircase, and added themselves to the embroilment.

"Not bad for the first evening's work," said Stalky, rearranging his collar. "I fancy Prout'll be somewhat annoyed. We'd better establish an *alibi*." So they sat on Mr. King's railings till prep.

"You see," quoth Stalky, as they strolled up to prep. with the ignoble herd, "if you get the houses well mixed up an' scufflin', it's even bettin' that some ass will start a real row. Hullo, Orrin, you look rather metagrobolised."

"It was all your fault, you beast! You started it. We've got two hundred lines apiece, and Heffy's lookin' for you. Just see what that swine Malpas did to my eye!"

"I like your sayin' *we* started it. Who called us cribbers! Can't your infant mind connect cause and effect yet? Some day you'll find it don't pay to jape with Number Five."

"Where's that shillin' you owe me?" said Beetle suddenly.

Stalky could not see Prout behind him, but returned the lead without a quaver.

"I only owed you ninepence, you old usurer."

"You've forgotten the interest," said McTurk. "A halfpenny a week per bob is Beetle's charge. You must be beastly rich, Beetle."

"Well, Beetle lent me sixpence." Stalky came to a full stop and made as to work it out on his fingers. "Sixpence on the nineteenth, didn't he?"

"Yes, but you've forgotten you paid no interest on the other bob—the one I lent you before."

"But you took my watch as security." The game was developing itself almost automatically.

"Never mind. Pay me my interest, or I'll charge you interest on interest. Remember I've got your note-of-hand," shouted Beetle.

"You are a cold-blooded Jew," Stalky groaned.

"Hush!" said McTurk very loudly indeed, and started as Prout came upon them.

"I didn't see you in that disgraceful affair in the form-room just now," said he.

"What, sir? We're just come up from Mr. King's," said Stalky. "Please, sir, what am I to do about prep.? They've broken the desk you told me to sit at, and the form's just swimming with ink."

"Find another seat—find another seat. D'you expect me to dry-nurse you? I wish to know whether you are in the habit of advancing money to your associates, Beetle?"

"No, sir; not as a general rule, sir."

"It is a most reprehensible habit. I thought that my house, at least, would be free from it. Even with my opinion of you, I hardly thought it was one of your vices."

"There's no harm in lending money, sir, is there?"

"I am not going to bandy words with you on your notions of morality. How much have you lent Corkran?"

"I—I don't quite know," said Beetle: it is difficult to improvise a going concern on the spur of the minute.

"You seemed certain enough just now."

"I think it's two and fourpence," said McTurk, with a glance of cold scorn at Beetle.

In the hopelessly involved finances of the study there was just that sum, to which both McTurk and Beetle laid claim, as their share in the pledging of Stalky's second-best Sunday trousers. But Stalky had maintained for two terms that the money was his "commission" for effecting the pawn; and had of course spent it on a study "brew."

"Understand this, then. You are not to continue your operations as a money-lender. Two and fourpence, you said, Corkran?"

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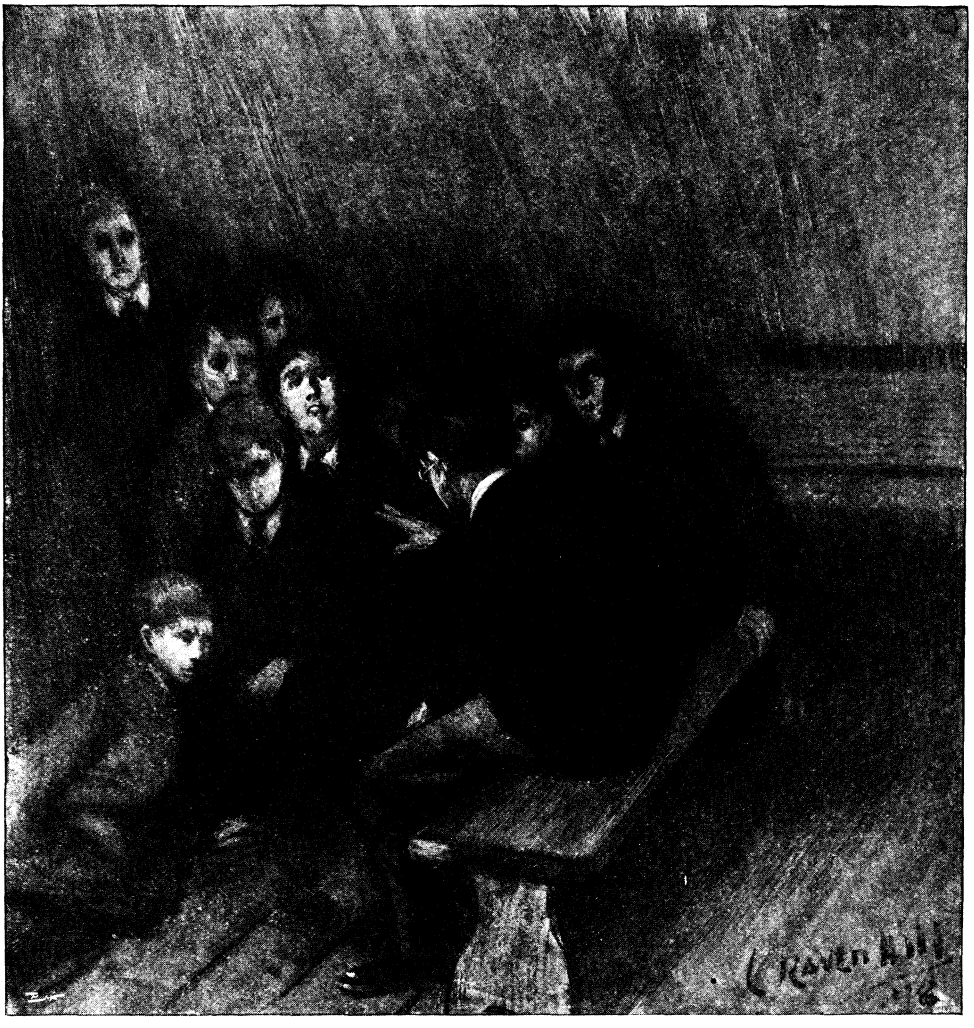

"Stories—unusual stories—are told in the form-room."

Stalky had said nothing, and continued so to do.

"Your influence for evil is quite strong enough without buying a hold over your companions." He felt in his pockets and (oh, joy!) produced a florin and fourpence. "Bring me what you call Corkran's note-of-hand, and be thankful that I do not carry the matter any further. The money is stopped *from your pocket-money*, Corkran. The receipt to my study, at once."

Little they cared! Two and fourpence in a lump is worth six weekly sixpences any hungry day of the week.

"But what the dooce *is* a note-of-hand?" said Beetle. "I only read about it in a book."

"Now you've jolly well got to make one," said Stalky.

"Yes—but our ink don't turn black till next day. 'Spose he'll spot that?"

"Not him. He's too worried," said McTurk. "Sign your name on a bit of impot-paper, Stalky, and write 'I O U two and fourpence.' Aren't you grateful to me for getting that out of Prout. Stalky'd never have paid . . . . Why, you ass!"

Mechanically Beetle had handed over the money to Stalky as treasurer of the study. The custom of years is not lightly broken.

In return for the document Prout expounded to Beetle the enormity of money-lending, which, like everything except compulsory cricket, corrupted houses and destroyed good feeling among boys; made youth cold and calculating, and opened the door to all evil. Finally, did Beetle know of

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any other cases? If so, it was his duty as proof of repentance to let his house-master know. No names need be mentioned.

Beetle did not know—at least, he was not quite sure, sir. How could he give evidence against his friends? The house might, of course—here he feigned an anguished delicacy—be full of it. He was not in a position to say. He had not met with any open competition in his trade, but if Mr. Prout considered it was a matter that affected the honour of the house (Mr. Prout did consider it precisely that) perhaps the house-prefects would be better. . . .

He spun it out till half-way through prep.

"And," said the amateur Shylock, returning to the form-room and dropping at Stalky's side, "if he don't think the house is putrid with it, I'm severial Dutchmen—that's all.—I've been to Mr. Prout's study, sir." This to the prep.-master. "He said I could sit where I liked, sir . . . Oh, he is just tricklin' with emotion. Yes, sir, I am only askin' Corkran to let me have a dip in his inkpot . . . ."

After prayers, on the road to the dormitory, Harrison and Craze, senior house-prefects, zealous in their office, waylaid them with a great anger.

"What have you been doing to Heffy this time, Beetle? He's been jawing us all the evening."

"What has His Serene Transparency been vexin' you for?" said McTurk.

"About Beetle lendin' money to Stalky," began Harrison; "and then Beetle went and told him that there was any amount of money-lendin' in the house."

"No, you don't," said Beetle, sitting on a boot-basket. "That's just what I didn't tell him. I spoke the giddy truth. He asked me if there was much of it in the house; and I said I didn't know."

"He thinks you're a set of filthy Shylocks," said McTurk. "It's just as well for you he don't think you're burglars. You know he never gets a notion out of his conscientious old head."

"Well-meanin' man. Did it all for the best." Stalky curled gracefully round the stair-rail. "Head in a drain-pipe. Full confession in the left boot. Bad for the honour of the house—very."

"Shut up," said Harrison. "You chaps always behave as if you were jawin' us when we come to jaw you."

"You're a heap too cheeky," said Craze.

"Allow me, in the gentlest manner in the world, to point out that if Heffy hadn't had a down on us we'd have been sub-prefects last term. I don't quite see where the cheek comes in, except on your part, in interferin' with a private matter between me an' Beetle after it has been settled by Prout." Stalky winked cheerfully at the others.

"That's the worst of clever little swots," said McTurk, addressing the gas. "They get made prefects before they have any tact, and they annoy chaps who could really help 'em to look after the honour of the house."

"We won't trouble you to do *that!*" said Craze hotly.

"Then what are you badgerin' us for?" said Beetle. "On your own showing, you've been so beastly slack in looking after the house that Prout believes it's a nest of money-lenders. I've told him that I've lent money to Stalky, and no one else. I don't know whether he believes me, but that finishes *my* case. The rest is *your* business."

"Now we find out," Stalky's voice rose, "that there is apparently an organised conspiracy throughout the house. For aught we know, the fags may be lendin' and borrowin' far beyond their means. *We* aren't responsible for it. We're just the rank and file."

"Are you surprised we don't wish to associate with the house?" said McTurk, with dignity. "We've kept ourselves to ourselves in our study till we were turned out, and now we find ourselves let in for—for this sort of thing. It's simply disgraceful."

"Then you hector and bullirag us on the stairs," said Stalky, "about matters that are your business entirely. *You* know we aren't prefects."

"You threatened us with a prefect's lickin' just now," said Beetle, boldly inventing as he saw the bewilderment in the faces of the enemy.

"And if you expect you'll gain anything from us by your way of approachin' us, you're jolly well mistaken. That's all. Good night!"

They clattered upstairs, injured virtue on every inch of their backs.

"But—but what the dickens have *we* done?" said Harrison, amazedly, to Craze.

"I don't know. Only—it always happens that way when one has anything to do with them. They're so beastly plausible."

And Mr. Prout called the good boys into his study anew, and succeeded in sinking both his and their innocent minds ten fathoms deeper in blindfolded bedazement. He spoke of steps and measures, of tone and

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loyalty in the house and to the house, and urged them to take up the matter tactfully.

So they demanded of Beetle whether he had any connection with any other establishment. Beetle promptly went to his house-master, and wished to know by what right Harrison and Craze had reopened a matter already settled between him and his house-master. In injured innocence no boy excelled Beetle.

Then it occurred to Prout that he might have been unfair to the culprit, who had not striven to deny or palliate his offence. He sent for Harrison and Craze, reprehending them very gently for the tone they had adopted to a repentant sinner, and when they returned to their study they used the language of despair. They then made headlong inquisition through the house, driving the fags to the edge of hysterics, and unearthing, with tremendous pomp and parade, the natural and inevitable system of small loans that prevails among small boys.

"You see, Harrison, Thornton minor lent me a penny last Saturday, because I was fined for breaking the window; and I spent it at Keyte's. I didn't know there was any harm in it. And Wray major borrowed twopence from me when my uncle sent me a post-office order—I cashed it at Keyte's—for five bob; but he'll pay me back before the holidays. We didn't know there was anything wrong in it."

They waded through hours of this kind of thing, but found no usury, nor anything approaching to Beetle's gorgeous scale of interest. The seniors—the school had no tradition of deference to prefects outside compulsory games—told them succinctly to go about their business. They would not give evidence on any terms. Harrison was one idiot, and Craze was another; but the greatest of all, they said, was their house-master.

When a house is thoroughly upset, however good its conscience, it breaks into knots and coteries—small gatherings in the twilight, box-room committees, and groups in the corridor. And when from group to group, with an immense affectation of secrecy, three wicked boys steal, crying "Cavé" when there is no need of caution, and whispering "Don't tell!" on the heels of trumpery confidences that instant invented, a very fine air of plot and intrigue can be woven round such a house.

At the end of a few days it dawned on Prout that he moved in an atmosphere of perpetual ambush. Mysteries hedged him on all sides, warnings ran before his heavy feet, and countersigns were muttered behind his attentive back. McTurk and Stalky invented many absurd and idle phrases—catch-words that sweep through a house as fire through stubble. It was a rare jest, and the only practical outcome of the Usury Commission, that one boy should say to a friend, with awful gravity, "*Do* you think there's much of it going on in the house?" The other would reply, "Well, one can't be too careful, you know." The effect on a house-master of humane conscience and good intent may be imagined. Again, a man who has sincerely devoted himself to gaining the esteem of his charges does not like to hear himself described, even at a distance, as "Popularity Prout" by a dark and scowling Celt with a fluent tongue. A rumour that stories—unusual stories—are told in the form-rooms, between the lights, by a boy who does not command his confidence, agitates such a man; and even elaborate and tender politeness—for the courtesy that wise grown men offer to a bewildered child was the courtesy Stalky wrapped round Prout—restores not his peace of mind.

"The tone of the house seems changed—changed for the worse," said Prout, to Harrison and Craze. "Have you noticed it? I don't for an instant impute——"

He never imputed anything, but on the other hand he never did anything else, and, with the best intentions in the world, he had reduced the house-prefects to a state as nearly bordering on nervous irritation as healthy boys can know. Worst of all, they began at times to wonder whether Stalky and Co. had not some truth in their often repeated assertions that Prout was a gloomy ass.

"As you know, I am not the kind of man who puts himself out for every little thing he hears. *I* believe in letting the house work out their own salvation—with a light guiding hand on the reins, of course. But there is a perceptible lack of reverence—a lower tone in matters that touch the honour of the house, a sort of hardness."

"Oh, Prout he is a nobleman, a nobleman,
a nobleman!
Our Heffy is a nobleman—
He does an awful lot,
Because his popularity—
Oh, pop-u popularity
His giddy popularity
Would suffer did he not!"

The study door stood ajar; and the song, borne by twenty clear voices, came faintly from a form-room. The fags rather liked the tune: the words were Beetle's.

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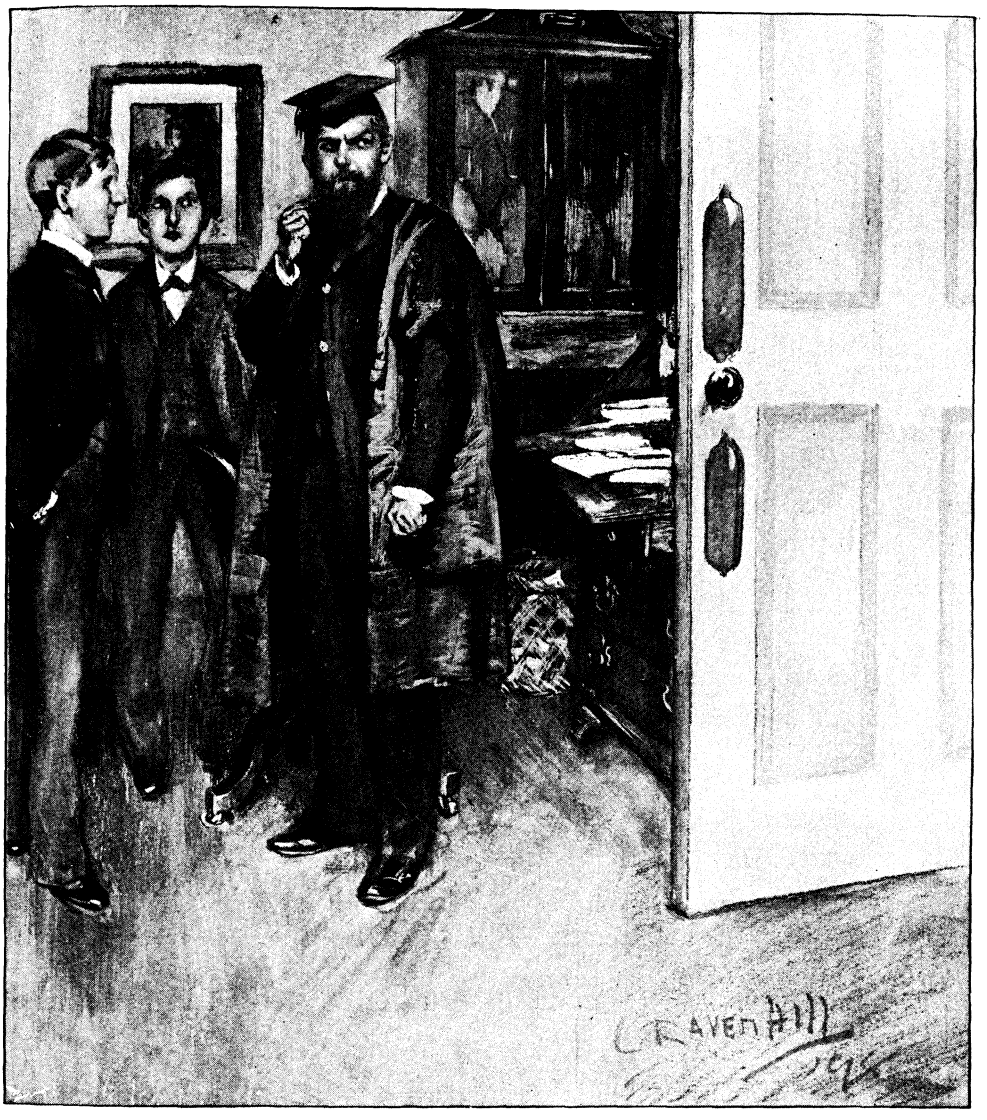

"'Oh, Prout he is a nobleman!'"

"That's a thing no sensible man objects to," said Prout, with a lop-sided smile; "but you know straws show which way the wind blows. Can you trace it to any direct influence? I am speaking to you now as heads of the house."

"There isn't the least doubt of it," said Harrison angrily. "I know what you mean, sir. It all began when Number Five study came to the form-rooms. There's no use blinkin' it, Craze. You know that, too."

"They make things rather difficult for us, sometimes," said Craze. "It's more their manner than anything else, that Harrison means."

"Do they hamper you in the discharge of your duties, then?"

"Well, no, sir. They only look on and grin—and turn up their noses generally."

"Ah!" said Prout sympathetically.

"I think, sir," said Craze, plunging into the business boldly, "it would be a great deal better if they were sent back to their studies—better for the house. They are rather old to be knocking about the form-rooms."

"They are younger than Orrin, or Flint—and a dozen others that I can think of."

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"Yes, sir: but that's different, somehow. They're rather influential. They have a knack of upsettin' things in a quiet way that one can't take hold of. At least, if one does——"

"And you think they would be better in their own studies again?"

Emphatically Harrison and Craze were of that opinion. As Harrison said to Craze, afterwards, "They've weakened our authority. They're too big to lick; they're made an exhibition of us over this usury business, and we're a laughing-stock to the rest of the school. I'm going up (for Sandhurst understood) next term. They've managed to knock me out of half my work already, with their—their lunacy. If they go back in their studies we may have a little peace."

"Hullo, Harrison." McTurk ambled round a corner, with a roving eye on all possible horizons. "Bearin' up, old man? That's right. Live it down! Live it down!"

"What d'you mean?"

"You look a little pensive," said McTurk. "Exhaustin' job superintendin' the honour of the house, ain't it? By the way, how are you off for mares'-nests?"

"Look here," said Harrison, hoping for instant reward. "We've recommended Prout to let you go back to your study."

"The dooce you have! And who under the sun are *you* to interfere between us and our house-master? Upon my Sam, you two try us very hard—you do, indeed. Of course we don't know how far you abuse your position to prejudice us with Mr. Prout; but when you deliberately stop me to tell me you've been makin' arrangements behind our back—in secret—with Prout—I—I don't know really what I ought to do."

"That's beastly unfair!" cried Craze.

"It is." McTurk had adopted a ghastly solemnity that sat well on his long, lean face. "Hang it all! A prefect's one thing, and an usher's another; but you seem to combine 'em. You recommend this—you recommend that! *You* say how and when we go back to our studies!"

"But—but—we thought you'd like it, Turkey. We did, indeed. You know you'll be ever so much more comfortable there." Harrison's voice was almost tearful.

McTurk turned away as though to hide his emotions.

"They're broke!" He hunted up Stalky and Beetle in a box-room. "They're sick! They've been beggin' Heffy to let us get back to Number Five. Poor devils! Poor little devils!"

"It's the olive branch," was Stalky's comment. "It's the giddy white flag, by gum! Come to think of it, we *have* metagrobolised 'em."

Just after tea that day Mr. Prout sent for them to say that if they chose to ruin their future by neglecting their work, it was entirely their own affair. He wished them, however, to understand that their presence in the form-rooms could not be tolerated one hour longer. He personally did not care to think of the time he must spend in eliminating the traces of their evil influences. How far Beetle had pandered to the baser side of youthful imagination he would ascertain later; and Beetle might be sure that if Mr. Prout came across any soul-corrupting consequences——

"Consequences of what, sir?" said Beetle, genuinely bewildered this time; and McTurk quietly kicked him on the ankle for being "fetched" by Prout.

Beetle, the house-master continued, knew very well what was intended. Evil and brief had been their careers under his eye; and as one standing *in loco parentis* to their yet uncontaminated associates, he was bound to take his precautions. The return of the study key closed the sermon.

"But what was the baser-side-of-imagination business?" said Beetle on the stairs.

"I never knew such an ass for justifyin' yourself," said McTurk. "I hope I jolly well skinned your ankle. Why *do* you let yourself be drawn by everybody?"

"Draws be blowed. I must have tickled him up in some way I didn't know about. If I'd had a notion of that before, of course I could have rubbed it in better. It's too late now. What a pity! 'Baser side.' What *was* he drivin' at?"

"Never mind," said Stalky. "I knew we could make it a happy little house. I said so, remember—but I swear I didn't think we'd do it so soon."

* * * * *

"No," said Prout most firmly, in Common-room. "I maintain that Gillett is wrong. True, I let them go back to their study."

"With your known views on cribbing, too," pursued little Hartopp. "What an immoral compromise!"

"One moment," said the Reverend John. "I—we—all of us have exercised an absolutely heart-breaking discretion for the last ten days. *Now* we want to know. Confess, have you known a happy minute since——?"

"As regards my house, I have not," said

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Prout. "But you are entirely wrong in your estimate of those boys. In justice to the others—in self-defence——"

"Ha! I thought it would come to that," murmured the Reverend John.

"——I was forced to send them back. Their moral influence was unspeakable—simply unspeakable."

And bit by bit he told his tale, beginning with Beetle's usury, and ending with the house-prefect's appeal.

"Beetle in the *rôle* of Shylock is new to me," said King, with twitching lips. "I own I heard rumours of it——"

"Before?" said Prout.

"No, after you had dealt with them; but I was careful not to inquire. I never interfere with——"

"I myself," said Hartopp, "would cheerfully give him five shillings if he could work out one simple sum in compound interest without three gross errors."

"Why—why—why," Mason, the mathematical master, stuttered, a fierce joy on his face, "you've been had—precisely the same as me——"

"And so you held an inquiry?" Little Hartopp's voice drowned Mason's ere Prout caught the import of the sentence.

"The boy himself hinted at the existence of a good deal of it in the house," said Prout.

"He is past master in that line," said the Chaplain. "But, as regards the honour of the house——"

"They lowered it in a week. I have striven to build it up for years. My own house-prefects—and boys do not willingly complain of each other—besought me to get them away. You say you have their confidence, Gillett. They may tell you another tale. As far as I am concerned, they can go to the devil in their own way. I'm sick and tired of them," said Prout bitterly.

But it was the Reverend John, with a smiling countenance, who went to the devil just after Number Five had cleared away a very pleasant little brew (it cost them two and fourpence) and was settling down to prep.

"Come in, Padre, come in," said Stalky, thrusting forward the best chair. "We've only met you official-like, these last ten days."

"You were under sentence," said the Reverend John. "I do not consort with malefactors."

"Ah, but we're restored again," said McTurk. "Mr. Prout has relented."

"Without a stain on our characters," said Beetle. "It was a painful episode, Padre, most painful."

"Now consider for a while, and perpend, *mes enfants*. It is about your characters that I've called to-night. In the language of the schools, what the dooce *have* you been up to in Mr. Prout's house? It isn't anything to laugh over. He says that you so lowered the tone of the house he had to pack you back to your studies. Is that true?"

"Every word of it, Padre."

"Don't be flippant, Turkey. Listen to me. I've told you very often that no boys in the school have a greater influence for good or evil than you have. You know I don't talk about ethics and moral codes, because I don't believe that the young of the human animal realises what they mean for some years to come. All the same, I don't want to think you've been perverting the juniors in any way. Don't interrupt, Beetle. Listen to me! Mr. Prout has a notion that *you* have been corrupting your associates somehow or other."

"Mr. Prout has so many notions, Padre," said Beetle wearily. "Which is this?"

"Well, he tells me that he heard you telling a story in the twilight in the form-room, in a whisper. And Orrin said, just as he opened the door, 'Shut up, Beetle; it's too beastly.' Now, then?"

"You remember Mrs. Oliphant's 'Beleaguered City' you lent me last term?" said Beetle.

The Padre nodded.

"I got the notion out of that; only, instead of a city, I made it the Coll. in a fog—besieged by ghosts of dead boys, who hauled chaps out of their beds in the dormitory. All the names are quite real. You tell it in a whisper, you know—with the names. Orrin didn't like it one little bit. None of 'em have ever let me finish it. It's just awful at the end part."

"But why in the world didn't you explain to Mr. Prout, instead of leaving him under the impression——?"

"Padre sahib," said McTurk, "it isn't the least good explainin' to Mr. Prout. If he hasn't one impression, he's bound to have another."

"He'd do it with the best o' motives. He's *in loco parentis*," purred Stalky.

"You young demons!" the Reverend John replied. "And am I to understand that the—the usury business was another of your house-master's impressions?"

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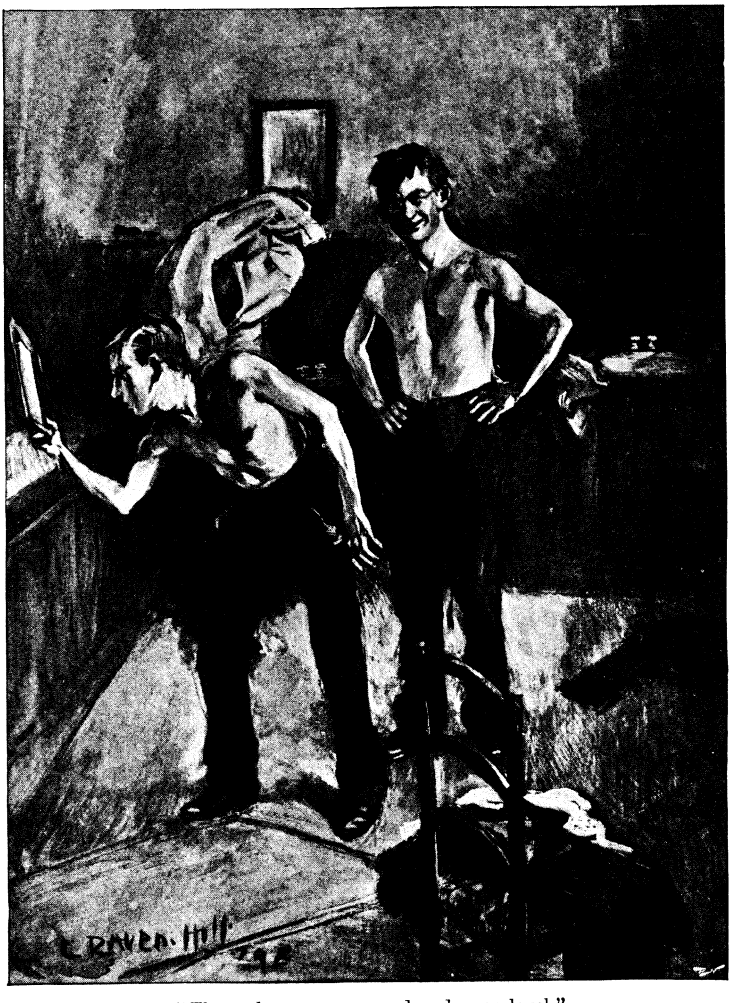
"Well—we helped a little in that," said Stalky. "I did owe Beetle two and fourpence—at least, Beetle says I did, but I never intended to pay him. Then we started a bit of an argument on the stairs, and—and Mr. Prout dropped into it accidental. That was how it was, Padre. He paid me cash down like a dook (stopped it out of my pocket-money just the same), and Beetle gave him my note-of-hand all correct. I don't know what happened after that."



"The wales were very red and very level."

"I was too truthful," said Beetle. "I always am. You see, he was under an impression, Padre, and I suppose I ought to have corrected that impression; but of course I couldn't be *quite* certain that his house wasn't given over to money-lendin', could I? I only thought the house-prefects might know more about it than I did. They ought to. They're giddy palladiums of public schools."

"They did, too—by the time they'd finished," said McTurk. "As nice a pair of conscientious, well-meanin', upright, pure-souled boys as you'd ever want to meet, Padre. They turned the house upside down—Harrison and Craze—with the best motives in the world."

"They said so. They said it very loud and clear. They went and shouted in our ear," said Stalky.

"My own private impression is that all three of you will infallibly be hanged," said the Reverend John.

"Why, *we* didn't do anything," said McTurk. "It was all Mr. Prout. Did you ever read a book about Japanese Wrestlers? My uncle—he's in the Navy—gave me a beauty once."

"Don't try to change the subject, Turkey."

"I'm not, sir. I'm givin' an illustration—same as a sermon. These wrestler-chaps have got some sort of trick that lets the other chap do all the work. Then they give a little wriggle, and he upsets himself. It's called *shibbuwichee* or *tokonoma*, or somethin'. Mr. Prout's a *shibbuwicher*. It isn't our fault."

"Did you suppose we went round corruptin' the minds of the fags?" said Beetle. "They haven't any, to begin with; and if they had, they're corrupted long ago."

"Well, I fancied I knew the normal range of your iniquities; but if you take so much trouble to pile up circumstantial evidence against yourselves, you can't blame anyone if——"

"We don't blame anyone, Padre. We haven't said a word against Mr. Prout, have we?" Stalky looked at the others. "We love him. He hasn't a notion how we love him."

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"H'm! You dissemble your love very well. Have you ever thought who got you turned out of your study in the first place?"

"It was Mr. Prout turned us out," said Stalky, with significance.

"Well, I was that man. I didn't mean it, but some words of mine, I'm afraid, gave Mr. Prout the impression——"

Number Five laughed aloud.

"You see it's just the same thing with you, Padre," said McTurk. "He *is* quick to get an impression, ain't he? But you mustn't think we don't love him, 'cause we do. There isn't an ounce of vice about him."

A double knock fell on the door.

"The Head to see Number Five study in his study at once," said the voice of little Foxy, the school sergeant.

"Whew!" said the Reverend John. "It seems to me that there is a great deal of trouble coming for some people."

"My word! He's gone and told the Head," said Stalky. "He's a moral double-ender. Not fair, luggin' the Head into a house-row!"

"I should recommend a copy-book on a—h'm—safe and certain part," said the Reverend John disinterestedly.

"Huh! He licks across the shoulders, an' it would slam like a beastly barn-door," said Beetle. "Good-night, Padre. We're in for it."

Once again they stood in the presence of the Head—Belial, Mammon, and Lucifer. But they had to deal with a man more subtle than them all. Mr. Prout had talked to him, heavily and sadly, for half an hour, and the Head had seen all that was hidden from the house-master.

"You've been bothering Mr. Prout," he said pensively. "House-masters aren't here to be bothered by boys more than is necessary. I don't like being bothered by these things. *You* are bothering *me*. That is a very serious offence. You see it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, now I purpose to bother you, on personal and private grounds, because you have broken into my time. You are much too big to lick, so I suppose I shall have to mark my displeasure in some other way. Say, a thousand lines apiece; a week's gating, and a few things of that kind. Much too big to lick, aren't you?"

"Oh, no, sir," said Stalky cheerfully. A week's gating in a summer term is serious.

"Ve-ry good. Then we will do what we can? I *wish* you wouldn't bother me."

It was a fair, sustained, equable stroke, with a little draw to it, but what they felt most was his unfairness in stopping to talk, between executions. Thus:—

"Among the—lower classes this would lay me open to a charge of—assault. You should be more grateful for your—privileges than you are. There is a limit—one finds it by experience, Beetle—beyond which it is never safe to pursue private vendettas, because—don't move—sooner or later one comes—into collision with the—higher authority, who has studied the animal. *Et ego*—McTurk, please—*in Arcadia vixi*. There's a certain flagrant injustice about this that ought to appeal to—your temperament. And that's all. You will tell your house-master that you have been formally caned by me."

"My word!" said McTurk, wriggling his shoulder-blades all down the corridor. "That was business! The Prooshan Bates has an infernal straight eye."

"Wasn't it wily of me to ask for the lickin', said Stalky, "instead of those impots?"

"Rot! We were in for it from the first. *I* know the cock of his old beak," said Beetle. "I was within an inch of blubbing."

"Well, I didn't exactly smile," Stalky confessed.

"Let's go down to the lavatory and have a look at the damage. One of us can hold the glass and t'others can squint."

They proceeded on these lines for some ten minutes. The wales were very red and very level. There was not a penny to choose between any of them for thoroughness, efficiency, and a certain clarity of outline that stamps the work of the artist.

"What are you doing down there?" Mr. Prout was at the head of the lavatory stairs, attracted by the noise of splashing.

"We've only been caned by the Head, sir, and we're washing off the blood. The Head said we were to tell you. We were coming to report ourselves in a minute, sir. (*Sotto voce.*) Gloats for Heffy!"

"Well, he deserves to score something, poor devil," said McTurk, putting on his shirt. "We've sweated a stone and a half off him since we began."

"But look here, why aren't we wrathy with the Head? He said it was a flagrant injustice. So it is!" said Beetle.

"Dear-r man," said McTurk, and vouchsafed no further answer.

It was Stalky who laughed till he had to hold on by the edge of a basin.

"You *are* a funny ass! What's that for?" said Beetle.

"I'm—I'm thinking of the flagrant injustice of it."

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The Finishing Touch.

From the Picture by G. P. Jacomb-Hood.

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A JUDGE'S ACTUAL LIFE.

By Michael Moscow.

ACCORDING to the popular idea, a judge spends his time on velvet. The casual visitor to a law court sees him seated in majestic isolation on the Bench, adjudicating upon the affairs, and it may be ordering the destinies, of men, undisturbed to all appearance by the wrangles of counsel and the feverish heats of witnesses; always cool, calm, collected and dignified, and the object of marked deference from all, yea, even the greatest ones of the earth.

"How nice it must be to be there!" exclaims the layman. True enough to a certain extent; but beyond it lies work of a terribly trying and responsible nature, taxing to the uttermost the best powers of the highly trained and cultivated lawyers who grace her Majesty's Bench. And no mere training or learning in the law will alone qualify a man to be a competent judge. He must possess personal qualities and attributes far beyond the common — qualities of moral courage, of physical endurance, strong mental balance, force of character, a ready resource, a ripe judgment, a capacity to read men and motives aright; in a word, all that goes to make a man of mark. A great judge must assuredly be made of the same stuff as a great statesman, a great soldier, or a great leader. He must be at once a man of mind and a man of action. Happily for this England of ours, the judges are usually all this and frequently more.

Let us go behind the scenes and look into the actual life and work of a judge.

A JUDGE'S PRIVATE ROOM AT THE ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE.

Take the criminal work first, as being that which appeals most strongly to the public. In order to do his duty by the people, the judge must master not only the leading principles that govern the laws affecting the liberty of the subject, but he must be intimately acquainted with the laws themselves and all the mighty machinery necessary for their proper administration. He must furthermore be a man of the world, and know something of the habits of all classes of life, so as to grasp the distinctive differences that frequently divide heinous crime from mere peccadillo. An act of thoughtless folly will often place some miserable creature in the dock, when in truth he should be treated rather as a noodle than as a criminal. Hence the province of the judge, among many other things, to adjust important differences of conduct and to measure degrees of motive.

The facts of a case, too, require and always receive the nicest consideration by a judge, even though they are left to the jury, to use the common phrase. When a prisoner is haled before the magistrates for a serious offence, a full note of the evidence against him is taken by their clerk, which evidence is read over to the deponents and signed as their "deposition." This evidence being sufficient, the prisoner is committed to take his trial at sessions or assizes.

A judge is about to open an assize, the gaol calendar comprising, as it frequently does, thirty, fifty, or even a hundred or more cases. This involves the careful reading of as many sets of depositions, often voluminous,

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and usually penned in a vile hand. That conscientious, clever, and entirely painstaking justiciar, Sir Henry Hawkins, undoubtedly the first criminal judge of the day, out of his hatred of all that is slovenly has constantly satirised the delinquents who delight in the exercise of the art of bad chirography. But all to no purpose. The eyes of her Majesty's judges are strained and their patience sorely tried, and until the typewriter is called in aid they must go on to the end, suffering needless tortures. Despite the villainous penmanship of the magisterial recording angels, their handiwork is scanned with scrupulous care, in order that the judge may be fully possessed of all the details of a case before coming into court for the actual trial of the prisoner—it may be for his life. Mark the importance of the act and the fact. A witness in the heat of his animosity often deposes to things during the rough and ready hearing before the magistrates that he dare not afterwards swear to in the calm, dispassionate, and searching inquiry presided over by an experienced and highly trained judge. During the man's evidence, the judge, although apparently engrossed in the task of taking down the *ipsissima verba* of the statement, is all the while comparing the two stories, and if any discrepancy appears beyond that which is natural to a true and unvarnished tale repeated after perhaps an interval of some weeks or months, the deponent is smartly pulled up, and as often as not the case for the prosecution ignominiously collapses for the simple and sufficient reason that the witness cannot swear "up to the mark," as the phrase goes. A parrot-like repetition is also looked upon with suspicion, and very properly so. Hence the good reason of depositions being taken before the magistrates and considered by the judge before and at the trial.

A Local Court

GEORGE CRUIKSHANK'S CARTOON OF A LAW COURT.

It is obvious that the mastering of this mass of evidence must take up a large part of the judge's scanty leisure. Even when the trial is over, if a conviction result and the circumstances of the case seem to require it, sentence is deferred, so that evidence in mitigation may be received and considered, a task that not infrequently involves the burning of much midnight oil by the judge and the exercise of no mean knowledge of what is best to be done, both for the sake of the prisoner and the community. Our criminal system is now largely preventive, and only to a small extent punitive—in marked and happy contrast to the spirit of vindictiveness that characterised what was styled retributive justice some few decades ago. In a recent article on "Some Circuit Customs," in the WINDSOR MAGAZINE, the writer touched at some length upon the savagery of the methods employed for the repression of crime in "the good old days."

Trials of civil actions form perhaps the easiest part of the work of a judge of the High Court. The sifting of evidence before a special or common jury is usually a simple matter for the lawyer accustomed by long practice to the contentiousness of *nisi prius*. The issues narrow themselves as a trial proceeds, thanks to the friendly co-operation of the counsel concerned; and that which may at the beginning of the case appear to be but a tangled skein of conflicting evidence is often speedily resolved into a thing of simplicity. A strong and skilful judge will reject this, that, or the other piece of evidence, in the exercise of his discretion, but of course always with the possibility ahead that the Court of Appeal may fail to appreciate his good work and order a new trial on some technical ground. Thus are the interests of suitors safeguarded and the judges protected from treading the primrose paths of overmuch originality. The law loves not the new departure, but lives on precedent.

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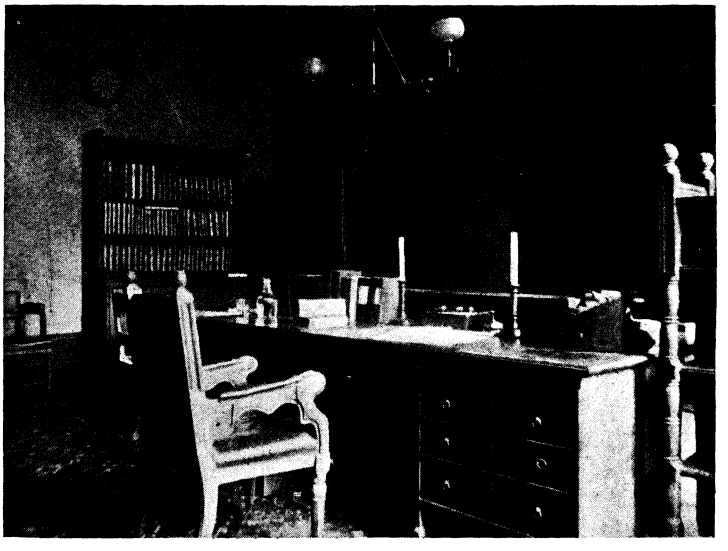
A sitting *in banco*, on the contrary, is one continual grind for a judge. Two or more judges constitute the court and their duty it is to decide difficult and novel points of law, put before them with all the ingenuity that the subtlety and learning of counsel can suggest. It is no uncommon thing in a court of *banc* to see the barrister's desks decorated with long rows of dusty tomes, each with an aggressive-looking tongue of white paper protruding itself defiantly towards the Bench. Case law, of course, but a lot of it mere dust to be thrown in the eyes of the weary wearers of the ermine. Such judges as Blackburn, Bramwell, and Cave usually swept this away in summary and pitiless fashion; but in a good fighting case they had of course to listen to the arguments of counsel, backed up by good sturdy law as laid down by departed brethren of the Bench. Relief comes perhaps at the rising of the court, but only for a brief space, for in all probability judgment has been reserved, which, being interpreted, meaneth that the judges and their clerks will have all their spare time filled up for perhaps a week, hunting out obscure cases and still more obscure Acts of Parliament, making copious extracts therefrom for sandwiching between original and entertaining remarks by the judges themselves when the day of decision shall arrive.



JUDGES' CHAMBERS.

The general public as a rule fatuously favours what it calls the jury courts when in search of amusement, but for genuine fun the *banc* courts take the palm. Bull-baiting is mild compared with the sport there provided. It is a veritable battle of the intellects.

The responsibility of the judge has been largely augmented of late, owing to the increasing popularity of trials without juries. Usually the cases involve questions of mixed law and fact, a jumble that has to be reduced to shape by the judge with a view of arriving at a righteous decision. The trials are, as a rule, of comparatively brief duration, for there is no jury to be bamboozled by crafty counsel, the judge mostly making a short cut through the figmental fringe of the case, commonly called by the lawyers, in their almost archaic but always expressive lingo, the giblets. But at times a heavy case is set down for hearing, perhaps including such enlivening questions as rights of way and water, when all the oldest inhabitants of perchance some out-of-the-way hole are called to prove in well-nigh unknown dialect the user of road or stream. Then it is that the judge discovers where all the deaf and stupid people come from, outside the asylums for the afflicted and the insane. Poor Judex!

Or he may get a run of patent cases, each lasting a week or so and requiring a knowledge of such diverse things as incandescent gas-lights, sewing-machines, electric cooking-stoves, bicycle saddles, liver pills, and cinematographs. The detail imported into these cases would astonish anyone but a patent agent. Miles of diagrams, bales of photographs, volumes of specifications, and tons of manufactured articles encumber the court and its circumjacent recesses. These impedimenta to the law's progress are piled systematically upon the judge, who somehow has to struggle upwards to light and air. Another and fearsome class of case is suggested by these last three words. But, hold! The mere suggestion of "ancient lights" is enough to drive the sanest man to Colney Hatch.

Turn we now to a region well known to

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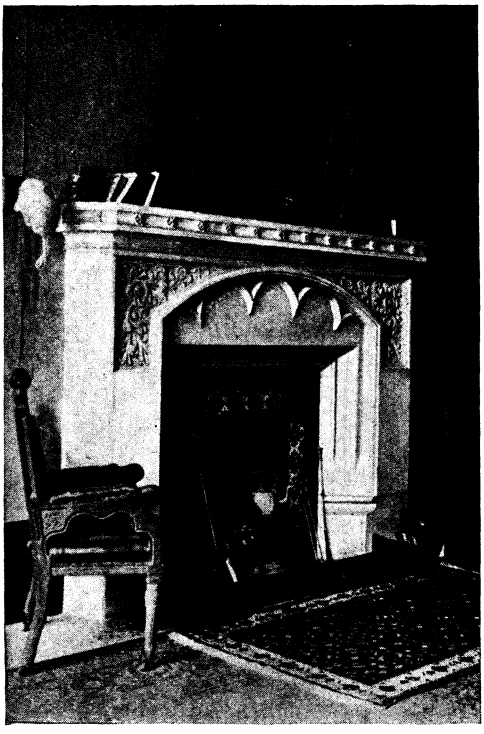
the lawyers, but a veritable *terra incognita* to the public, save a misfortunate few who happen to suffer social extinction as "judgment debtors." This place is styled in the official returns, "Judges' Chambers." The name suggests a magnificent suite of apartments in the very centre of Mr. Street's petrous labyrinth over against the Strand, furnished in all the splendour of a Lyceum mediæval scene. As a matter of hard, prosaic fact, it is the darkest, dingiest, and dismallest room in all the Royal Courts of Justice. Facing due north, never a ray of sunshine penetrates its dusky depths, and here one of her Majesty's judges sits day after day during Term time —and even twice or thrice a week in the Long Vacation, when the ignorant suppose him to be a-sailing on the sea or otherwise recuperating his nervous energies. That Long Vacation, it may be remarked in parentheses, is one of the best abused and at the same time most cherished of our good old institutions. Threatened men live long, sayeth the proverb, and the much maligned Vacation promises to be Long to the end of the legal chapter.



A JUDGE'S PRIVATE ROOM.

Here, then, in the chamber of commerce of disputation, is to be seen my lord the judge, bereft of robes and uncrowned by horsehair, seated behind a big oak table barricaded by books, and looking very much like any other of her Majesty's lieges. At the stroke of eleven o'clock in comes an official with a sheaf of affidavits filed in support of *ex parte* applications for orders giving permission to do all sorts of curious things. A young subaltern, for instance, runs up a bill with a tailor and goes off to India with his regiment and perhaps a cool hundred of cash borrowed from the sartorial artist—all in the way of business, of course. Time goes, but no money comes. Tailor gets anxious and applies to the hero of a hundred border passes to pay up. In response he gets a put-off, and, patience exhausted, he goes to the court for a writ. India being out of the jurisdiction of the home courts, special leave has to be granted by a judge in chambers for the writ to go. Or a defaulting debtor is about to bolt, and a writ of *ne exeat regno* is wanted to act as an estoppel upon his departure out of the Queen's domains. Or a creditor is about to sell up a man's home without sufficient reason, and an injunction is urgently wanted to stop the sale. All these, and countless other things, are brought before the judge, who has to decide on the statements of only one side—a difficult and sometimes dangerous thing. The sheaf being stacked, the portal of chambers is opened at a signal, and in rushes a motley crew, called, in the language of the place, "*ex partes* in person." What do they want? Listen! *Place aux dames*, the first to speak is a half-witted old woman who indulges in some rigmarole about being defrauded of her property to the value of some millions. Three times a week she makes this statement and is delighted if the judge will gravely accept her bundle of greasy papers, to be duly perused and considered —a task that has already been done dozens of times by the different judges on the rota. Then nervously approaches a poor creature who wants back the child entrusted years before to some Dr. Barnardo in the hour of her stress and trouble. The judge elicits that the waif will, if returned to its parent, have to live amid heart-breaking poverty and soul-destroying surroundings, and gently declines to interfere, in the best interests of the child. Consequently the writ of *habeas corpus* desired by the mother is not issued. Now comes a cohort of the legion of "lady litigants," and the judge bends before the breeze. Barristers, solicitors, and others swell the crowd of

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applicants, who finally are sent away, full or empty, according to their deserts and powers of suasion.

The list proper is then tackled. Perhaps there are forty odd summonses down for hearing, half being attended by counsel, also shorn of their courtly glories of wig and gown. These summonses are often of the greatest importance, affecting really the shape in which a case shall ultimately be presented to the court for trial, and not infrequently disposing of the issue itself, involving, it may be, thousands of pounds. An average of five minutes disposes of each summons. Counsel on both sides talk at once; occasionally, however, and from a fine sense of charity to the judge, only indulging in an intermittent fire of interruption of each other's remarks. While they are wrangling the judge usually reads the papers submitted to him and makes up his mind as to the proper order to be made, indorsing the summons with a brief decision. Counsel—who as a rule know beforehand what the result will be, from the depths of their experience—watch the judicial pen until it gets to the word "costs," and then give a display of lingual athletics until the half-deafened but imperturbable judge has written "plaintiff's" or "defendant's," according to his discretion. So goes the day, case after case being speedily adjudicated upon amid the eternal strife of tongues. The strain of all this must be, and is, enormous; and it is little wonder that, at the end of the Sittings or Term, the judge feels as if his head had been beaten with *baculi*.

A CORNER IN THE JUDGES' COMMON ROOM.

Some of the judges go on with the chamber work without even the customary adjournment for luncheon, merely munching a biscuit by way of sustenance at half-time and while disposing of the list, in order to liberate as speedily as possible the hundreds of busy professional men in attendance. Others clear the room for ten minutes or so while they discuss a modest meal. One judge, who consistently leaned to the side of frugality, was the hero of an incident that has become historic. While he was enjoying a basin of broth in seclusion, a young solicitor ran breathlessly to the vigilant janitor outside with the hasty inquiry, "What's the judge on now?" "Pea-soup!" responsively roared the bull-voiced attendant, much to the amusement of my lord, who ever afterwards lunched on bread and cheese, regardless of the expense.

Talking of lunches brings us to that refreshing and recuperative interval in the day's doings of a judge on the court roster, allowed by custom from half-past one o'clock till two. A few of the judges take their luncheons in the privacy of their own rooms, but many prefer the social intercourse of the Common Room at the Law Courts. This is dotted with small round tables, each laid with covers for four, and here, at uncomfortably close quarters, the judges of the land do congregate for a chop and cheerful conversation. A judge on the bench usually contents himself with few utterances; but off it, and especially at the luncheon adjournment, he is among the most loquacious of men. With brains stimulated by the events of the morning, they let themselves go, with gleeful exercise of perky wit and pawky wisdom, heartily glad to get once more into the arena of common interests.

The bill of fare is of the plainest. A cutlet or chop is the favourite dish, varied

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occasionally by a slice of cold meat or the leg of a chicken, with a little liquid in the shape of some simple mineral water. A glass of *vin ordinaire* or a teaspoonful of mountain dew may perchance lend their kindly assimilative aid, but as a rule the judges are averse to alcohol. "Sober as a judge" is no idle saying. One famous judge of the Queen's Bench Division, the happiest and sunniest of men in private life, maintains his buoyancy of mind and manner by the observance of that vacuum said by the scientific to be abhorred of Nature. His luncheon is as a rule literally nothing.

In a less degree only than royal personages and prominent politicians, the judges are much in request at every conceivable form of public and private function. Perhaps one day a judge will attend the Lord Mayor's banquet on November 9th, and the next preside at a thieves' supper in Drury Lane. Or he is asked to take the chair at a May meeting or make a speech in support of the claims of temperance. Nothing is too great or too small for his support—at least, so he finds it.

MR. G. J. PAUL,
Assistant Superintendent of the Royal Courts of Justice.

Among the numerous state ceremonies at which by virtue of his office a judge has to assist, perhaps that of swearing-in the Lord Mayor on November 9th aforesaid is the most interesting. It is, in fact, the reason of existence of the Lord Mayor's Show, an institution at once historic and democratic. Here is the official programme, as presented, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer probably from time immemorial—

Ceremonial of 9th November 1880

The mode of proceeding on the occasion of the Lord Mayor of the City of London being presented to the Lord Chief Baron and Barons of the Exchequer Division at the High Court of Justice at Westminster

The new Lord Mayor is presented at the Bar of the Court by the Recorder or Common Serjeant who addresses the Barons on behalf of the present and the late Lord Mayor

The Lord Chief Baron then addresses the present and also the late Lord Mayor

Then the Declaration is to be made by the new Lord Mayor pursuant to the second regulation in the 12th Section of the Statute "Promissory Oaths Act 1868" (the Lord Mayor will repeat the words of the Declaration after the Queen's Remembrancer in the words following)

I William McArthur do solemnly sincerely and truly declare that I will faithfully perform the duties of my Office of Lord Mayor of the City of London

The Lord Mayor will then sign the Declaration which is to be handed back to the Queen's Remembrancer

WARRANT.—The Recorder reads a Warrant from the Mayor Commonalty and Citizens of London appointing their Attorney to sue prosecute defend and lay claim to all their liberties &c. in the Exchequer &c. which is afterwards read by the Queen's Remembrancer

The Recorder prays their Lordships that this Warrant may be recorded

The Lord Chief Baron then says to the Queen's Remembrancer "Let the Warrant be recorded"

On this occasion Sir William McArthur was the victim of a practical joke by some mischievous members of the junior Bar who were packed tightly into the second and back rows of the old Court of Exchequer, the front being reserved for my Lord Mayors, past, present, and future, with the usual imposing retinue. Just as the new Lord Mayor was entering the court and all eyes were naturally turned towards him, a sprightly junior, selected by lot for the daring deed, placed a penny loaf on the desk in front of which his lordship was to stand. Poor Sir William gazed upon the comestible, evidently perplexed at this unexpected item in a programme in which he had been carefully drilled beforehand. Was the humble loaf emblematic of the Bread of Maintenance, or was he expected to break and to eat in token of amity with the judges? He looked anxiously at them, but never a twinkle betrayed their amusement at the scene, a solemn silence, like that of the calm before a storm, pervading the court. Had he but glanced behind him and seen the grinning faces of the hopeful juniors, the murder would have been out, but the good man was spared the revelation and the discomfiture.

The statutory declaration mentioned in the Ceremonial was substituted in recent times for the oath of fidelity previously taken by the new Lord Mayor for centuries. The "Exchequer Book," on which the oath was taken from 1640 onwards, is still in existence,

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and is a fine copy of the New Testament in black letter, the work of Thomas Buck and Roger Daniel, printers to the University of Cambridge. The title-page, however, is in Roman type, and bears a written inscription to the effect that the book was "New Bound, Michs. 1772," and that it was again "New Bound, Easter 1819." The binding is of royal red leather, richly decorated with a classic design in heavy gilding, and bears on both sides boldly the arms of his Britannic and Hanoverian Majesty King George III. The fly-leaf is signed: "J. Morris, 1797," who goes on to record that he was—

"Cryer to the
Rt. Honble. Sir Archibald Macdonald.
Rt. Honble. Sir Vicary Gibbs.
Rt. Honble. Sir Alexander Thomson.
Rt. Honble. Sir Richard Richards.
Rt. Honble. Sir William Alexander.
The Rt. Honble. Lord Lyndhurst, Jan. 1831."

Seeing that the first-named Lord Chief Baron took office in 1793, and the last vacated for the woolsack in 1834, good Master Morris must have been crying in court for some forty years—a healthy and at that time highly profitable occupation yielding an income little less than that of a judge.

Like other public men, the judges are pestered by all sorts and conditions of letter-writers—mostly bad sorts and ill-conditioned. The morning mail may bring one or two scurrilous postcards, penned probably by lunatics at large; a missive adorned with skull and crossbones and containing a message of murder in red ink; an application from some disappointed suitor for a rehearing of his case, and requests of every imaginable and unimaginable description. But to the credit of the actual criminal classes be it said that they seldom or never resort to threats on paper nor to violence in person. A prisoner may leave the dock uttering imprecations against the judge who has just sentenced him, and vowing vengeance when he comes out, but he does nothing. Neither do the friends or relatives of a convict molest a judge in any way. Deep down in the hearts of the people is the settled opinion that a judge usually inclines to mercy, and that, whatever the sentence, he does his best for the prisoner. This conviction protects the sacred person of the judge from attack of any sort, and it is a fact of which we as Englishmen should be especially proud.

THE EXCHEQUER BOOK, ON WHICH LORD MAYORS USED TO TAKE THEIR OATH.

And proud we are of our judges. Hard worked, sorely tried and never found wanting, ever conscientious, and always faithful to their charge however burdensome, they realise the nation's ideal of what the occupant of the judgment seat should be. May the great British people never lower that lofty image!

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THE MARRYING OF THE DOCTOR.

By R. Ramsay.

Illustrated by Frances Ewan.

"THE unlucky child!"

It was a bit of by-play at a garden party.

All that afternoon the sun had been burning down, fading the gay summer dresses, shimmering in under the parasols, and at the shady side of the lawn were irregular ranks of chairs where the elder ladies sat and judged the party—a formidable array.

A hard fight was going on in the tennis court, and its crowd of watchers were applauding the last fray of the afternoon; there was laughter and challenging and a wild running towards the net. Behind the trees, in a darker grass, there was croquet and a small party engaged in a deadly quarrel. Parted from the rest by flowers and bushes and a barrier of potatoes, girls were walking linked in confidential parties in the hidden wilderness of the vegetable garden. And as one among them had a ring to display, they paused amid the asparagus and admired its glitter.

"The unlucky child!" said Jessie Carlton Smith, with her high, strange, half-bitter laugh. "Well, we must all try to mitigate the misfortune by a gift of trinkets."

"The origin of wedding presents," said a man gravely, "was, I understand, to bribe men to marry."

"*I* understand it as an attempt to make up to woman for extinguishing herself and —trusting to one of you."

"You are unmerciful."

"Ah, doctor, not to you! I put you on a pinnacle. But the rest——"

There was a little chorus of laughter.

The sun had wandered round to the west; it was falling at last, and the trees were riddled with yellow sunlight. Standing unwinkingly in its way was a little pale, straight figure, with a haughty face and a sarcastic twist at her lip when smiling. Men were afraid of Miss Smith, who had the reputation of being a man-hater, and lived up to it with all her might. Perhaps that was why they admired her. Warfare is always more stimulating than peace, and she was always tilting. Perhaps that was why they gathered round her as round a princess, all sparring gallantly, until she turned away from the sun abruptly.

"That poor Kitty! I must go and make my commiserations."

"Why is she so bitter against us all?" said a man curiously, almost unhappily. "If she thinks a man likes her, she looks ready to murder him."

"I've heard that some fellow jilted her long ago, and she imagines we are all alike. What do you say, doctor?"

"It's her nature, just as it's yours to rake up legends and be an ass."

"I say, it would be a joke if she were to marry. Doctor, you've heard of stranger things?"

"No," said the doctor emphatically. He was watching the upright figure walking across the grass, nodding carelessly at acquaintances. He remembered with conviction the bitter speech in which she had first pinned her colours to the mast. That was when she first arrived and they had not yet learnt that she judged men harshly and looked at their failures with a hard disdain.

"Men? Ah, but I know them—mean, false, and fickle. Traitors! (I don't mean you, doctor; you are a helpful abstraction, like all your kind.) I've no wish to hurt them, because they amuse me; but as for liking them—— Fiddlesticks!"

That was long ago, and although she had been years among them the Man-Hater had not altered. Her pretty hair was almost grey, but she looked as young and upright as ever, untiring, active, with eyes that were always gay, but hardly smiling and hardly happy.

"No," repeated the doctor calmly.

Its attraction gone, the little ring dissipated, and Dr. McGregor was the last man remaining. He was turning away, also, to go and talk to the old ladies in the background, when he heard the high, sarcastic voice of Miss Smith, and almost immediately a hand was laid on his arm.

"Why didn't you bring your wife?"

"She is away, you know——"

"Ah, I remember. And she said she would not leave you unless you had an assistant to ease her mind. Are you like the rest of them—are you cheating her?"

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The doctor smiled. He was not a young man, and he had been overworked.

"I stick to my word," he said, "and I expect that young man in a day or two."

"Well, I'm going. I don't offer you a lift, because they tell me I'm risking my life with Polly, and I couldn't deprive the place of its precious doctor."

She shook hands and in another minute there was a wild plunging in the drive. The gravel dashed up against the windows; there was a rush and an exclamation. But Miss Smith, sitting up in her high cart, was not in the least excited.

"Stand out of the way!" she called thanklessly to the men all running towards the plunging horse, and they had to stand aside at that imperious call as much as at Polly's heels. The Man-Hater flung the reins round her wrist and glanced back slightingly, her little pale, straight figure very haughty, and her smile all disdain.

"It's all right, good people!" she said, and disappeared in the sinking sun.

* * * * *

A day or two afterwards Dr. McGregor was wandering in a disturbed manner about the house. It was plain that he was in that state of unhappy restlessness that afflicts a man who has to prepare the guest-chamber with his wife away. She had said that the maids could manage; but could they? He paid three visits to the room, and at the third concluded that it was all right and tidy; but he had thought the same on his first visit and then it had struck him, when half way down the stairs, that there was no soap. He put his head in again nervously. Matches? Candles? Ah, the coal-scuttle? Empty!

Leaning over the banisters he called downstairs in a reproachful shout—

"Jane, Jane, where are the coals?"

The kitchen door was ajar far down below, and while the doctor waited for it in triumph up came the cook's answer, very shrill. Jane was not much in awe of her master.

"Coals, sir?—in summer!"

The doctor came down crestfallen and retreated into his study, but he could not

"It was only Miss Smith of Tree."

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sit down peaceably and smoke. Scott, who was coming here for a little break in his life of adventure, might turn up at any time; and McGregor was looking forward eagerly to his arrival. They had been chums formerly in one or two tight places, and now McGregor was staid and married, and Scott a will o' the wisp. If the boy had only wired what train was bringing him—but it was like him! a happy-go-lucky fellow, always unlucky and always careless.

There was a sound of wheels in the street, and he jumped up, hurrying to the window; but it was only Miss Smith of Tree calling at the post-office on her way through the town. She saw him and nodded, an odd little upright figure, both hands gripping the reins, and her pretty grey hair tucked under a sailor hat.

The cart swung past, almost grazing the curb, and in that brief minute the doctor was puzzled by something in her face, something unfamiliar. She was out of sight in an instant. He had never seen her drive quite so recklessly—quite as fast.

It grew dark. The red lamp at the doctor's house had been lit, and the street was silent. Dr. McGregor leaned out of his study window. If Scott had not missed the last train as well as (presumably) all the others, he must turn up soon. But there was no sign of him among the two or three distant figures trailing up from the station. The doctor was peering impatiently up the ill-lit street—

"Doctor, doctor!"

His head, rather bald, was shining in the light of the red lamp near, and a rider galloping up had seen it. The doctor drew it in with dignity, and then, in curiosity, thrust it out again.

"What's the matter?"

The rider had reached the window; he pulled up in great excitement, his

"'They assured me that master's friend was an elderly gentleman.'"

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horse glittering with perspiration and shining black in the darkness.

"It's an accident, doctor. Wanted immediately!"

Taken aback Dr. McGregor stared at the man.

"Whose accident? What accident?" he demanded.

"Miss Smith of Tree."

II.

"DOCTOR!"

It was a strangely eager call.

The patient had lifted herself a little and a queer kind of mirth in her eyes was fighting with the pain. He returned to her side—but silent.

All last night he had watched by his patient. She had been carried into the house badly injured, and the old lady who acted as her companion was terrified into a fit; the servants also were in a panic. With the morning came nurses and a London doctor, a great man whose fiat was life and death; and all the time Dr. McGregor had been very kind and silent. He had driven the Londoner to the station and then had gone to call on the parson; but he was away and his curate had disappeared on a bicycle. McGregor visited his other patients and then returned to Tree.

It was evening now and the candles flung an eerie illumination across the bed where the mistress of the house was lying, waiting for an answer. She had asked if she was to die.

He looked at her gravely, but tried to smile.

"I am afraid——" he began, attempting that pitiless cheating that is called preparation; but his patient interrupted with a quick return of her active manner.

"Afraid?" she said. "*I'm* afraid—that you will lie to me. You must be sure—sure. And if I'm to die ——"

She paused, gazing at him earnestly, and then her eyes darkened suddenly and grew larger.

"Is it minutes—or hours? or, doctor—is it a day?"

"It may be days," he answered, and he saw the agony in her face diminish.

"Then there's time," she said; "but I have not a friend. Oh, doctor, for the love of God, will you help me?"

"Hush, hush!" he said anxiously. "Anything I can do, I give you my word of honour! Only lie still and rest."

But her face was desperately eager; it was hardly likely, and yet—was there a faint colour in the cheeks? It struck him again that there was something in it that was unfamiliar—and strangely young.

"Will you find somebody to marry me?"

He almost gasped in his astonishment.

Was it indeed this woman, hating all men with a bitter hatred, who was imploring?

"Who? Who?" he said stupidly.

"Anybody," she cried, with the same desperate eagerness. "How should I care?"

And then he thought she was mad.

"How should I care?" she repeated. "But help me! you have given your word to help me; and as you fear to be haunted all your life by the despair of a dying woman"—she raised herself a little and her tones grew wild—"as you fear that, help me! If I die first—man, if I die first!—I must be married!"

The doctor saw how agitation was shaking her and laid his hand soothingly over hers; his voice was grave and gentle, but she guessed what he was thinking.

"Ah," she said, "I'm not mad. It's not that—it is that I am to die. Let me tell you——"

He put something to her lips first and made her drink it, and then sat down by the bed. Recognising the indomitable will that was sustaining her, he saw that it was better to let her unburden her mind, because with her the mind ruled the body. Her head had fallen back on the pillow; she was breathing irregularly, almost as if in sobbing, but in her eyes the pain was not dimmed with any tears.

"I'm rich," she said, "but it has ruined my life, that money. And yet it is so bitterly laughable! My uncle had a horror of single women; he fancied"—and she smiled faintly in the midst of her hurrying explanation—"that they were the dupes of designing people and crazy fancies. So if I did not marry his money was to go to another branch—I could not will it away. (And he hoped that a wholesome terror of that would make me marry). If I married it was altogether mine."

"Yes," said Dr. McGregor gently; he reached out his hand to put the drink again to her lips.

"There was somebody," she said, "and I loved him."

She stopped and lifted her eyes to the doctor's; never in all his life had he seen eyes as sad and wistful.

"They parted us," she went on, "because of the money—because if I died unmarried

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they would be richer than they were already. I'm speaking of the only relations left to me in the world! They said he was false, and proved it—and I believed them. And then they were not afraid. They knew I would never marry anybody but—Jack."

She could not speak for a minute.

"I came away," she said then; "I could not live there any longer and see their insulting faces, although I did not guess *how* insulting! My life has been bitter all these years; and—doctor—I have just learnt that it was all a lie!"

There was another pause; her voice became imploring.

"You understand?" she said. "They must not triumph in their treachery. I have heard the truth—and I have heard that he is poor and struggling in a strange land—he whom I thought false and happy—and I'm to die!"

With a sudden energy she lifted her head from the pillow. It was a pitiful imitation of the quick manner of—yesterday.

"You promised," she said. "I haven't a friend in the world, and I'm dying; but if I die a married woman it's all mine to leave. I can leave it to him, my love, my love, poor and struggling! Listen! the licence—telegraph—tell them it's life and death—and a lawyer—the will must be written. Doctor, I trust you; you will find a man—I will give him a thousand pounds!—to lend me his name and let me die—comforted!"

It was late when Dr. McGregor returned home. He unlatched the door wearily and walked in. The hall was dimly lighted, and as he stumbled across it to his study he was assailed by a perfume of strange tobacco.

The study lamp was turned up and the study itself was in a fearful and wonderful state of order; as if a stray bachelor had been shut in there to amuse himself. (The instinct of putting things in their places is one evolved out of many troubles; it is an instinct with which the careless married man is not much afflicted.) A pair of long grey trousers were slanting up towards the chimney, and the back of a very black head was visible over a big armchair.

"Hallo!" said McGregor, pausing. The intruder jumped up with an exclamation.

"Don't shoot!" he said, "I'm not a burglar. Though I believe your three maids are sitting shivering in a row on the highest landing, wondering when I shall begin to murder them. They assured me that master's friend was an elderly gentleman."

McGregor was shaking hands with him. Both laughed, but their laughter was hardly steady. They had not met for a while, and each was a little moved and startled at the sight of the other—one because his friend had aged and altered, the other because his friend looked just the same.

"Why, you're a boy still!" said McGregor.

"It's not my fault, sir—as I told the maids."

And the older doctor, remembering the hard life that had been Scott's lately, did not contradict him, but went in search of hot water. After a battle with the unfamiliar mysteries of the kitchen he returned with a kettle, and Scott, who had had practice, lit the fire. Then they sat and talked far into another hour.

All at once Dr. McGregor gave a kind of jump and stared earnestly at the black head opposite leaning against the dark-red leather of the chair; an idea had disturbed him.

"You didn't bring back a wife?" he said nervously, glancing with involuntary apprehension about the room.

Scott laughed, looking up. His face was very young, like a boy's, but with a line or two in the forehead.

"Don't look so scared. Why should I?"

Dr. McGregor looked relieved.

"It's all right, then. You were the only man I could think of, and I was half afraid. Look here, Scott, will you do a kind action? I—I want you to marry a patient of mine."

"What?"

The elder doctor bent forward.

"Don't shout," he said. "She is dying."

"But—but what on earth do you mean?" cried Scott. He had started up from his lazy attitude and was staring at his friend in utter astonishment.

"It's a sad story," said Dr. McGregor, and his kindly eyes darkened; they were haunted by a white, wild, wistful face. "I have known her five years—almost ever since you chucked up your chances and went abroad; and now there has been an accident, she can't live, and she wants to leave her money to some man she cares for. But it seems by some extraordinary provision she cannot will it away as a spinster. And, Scott, if you'd seen the poor thing and heard her—a man could not stand out against such a piteous appeal. I said I'd help her."

"But—" stammered Scott, half bewildered, half understanding; "it's—it's a queer thing to spring on a fellow."

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"I know that; and it's just to save gossip and chattering that I pitched on you. She is willing to give a thousand pounds to any stranger who will agree. All you have to do is to lend the poor soul your name for an hour or two. It is unprofessional, if you like—but I tell you, Scott, her heart is breaking!"

There was a brief silence and the men looked at each other.

"I will do it," said the younger man at last; "but you must make it plain that there is to be no offer of—of reward or advantage of any kind."

"All right," said McGregor heartily. "I knew I could depend on you."

Scott was staring thoughtfully into the fire: his face was as like a boy's as ever, but it was a troubled boy. The sadness of the thing had moved him—that and its strangeness.

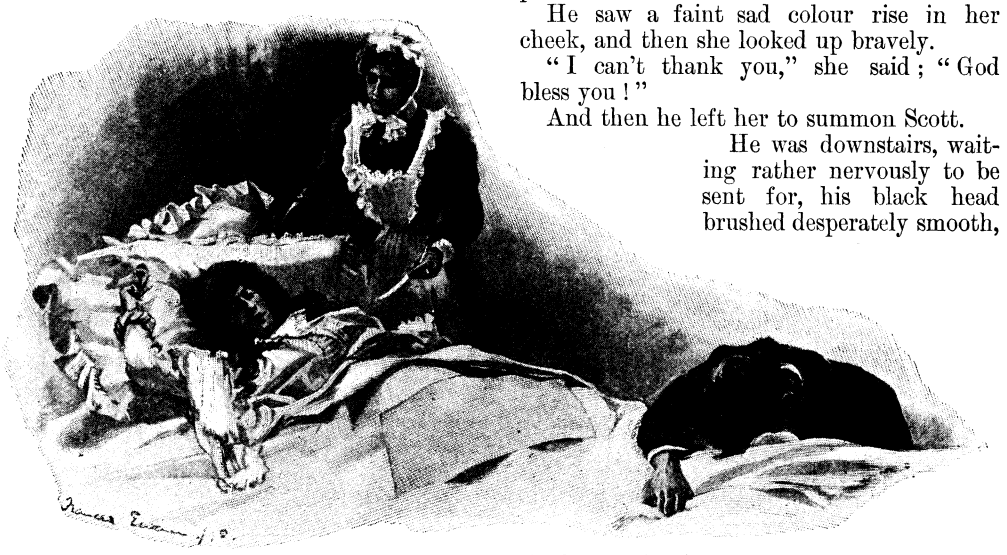
"What is her name?" he asked mechanically.

"Smith."

"Smith? a common name——"

"Good Heavens! what does it matter? you are not going to take it," cried McGregor impatiently. His assistant was still staring into the dim red summer fire.

"It's not that," he said, with a strange little laugh.



"'What name am I to sign?' she asked."

III.

DR. MCGREGOR came into the darkened room slowly, softly; and yet as soon as he had crossed the threshold he saw the eager eyes of his patient gazing at him, waiting for an answer.

The lawyer had been, and the will was written; there was nothing now but to sign it; and Miss Smith was clinging with a desperate strength to the life that must last a little longer. As the doctor approached she smiled, or made an attempt at it—her face was all wistful with inquiry.

"It's all right," he said gruffly. Then he sent the nurse to the further end of the room.

"I have the licence," he said; "the vicar is away, but I have brought a curate."

"And——?" she asked.

"——and my assistant will take the—the part."

He saw a faint sad colour rise in her cheek, and then she looked up bravely.

"I can't thank you," she said; "God bless you!"

And then he left her to summon Scott.

He was downstairs, waiting rather nervously to be sent for, his black head brushed desperately smooth, and a kind of amused unhappiness in his face.

"I don't half like it," he said, as McGregor dragged him up the stair. At the threshold of the sick chamber Scott paused, with his hand gripping McGregor's arm——

Inside the room had been darkened and the light hardly struggled in; the quaint, rich furniture was all in shadow, but a little wandering ray of light lit the wistful face on the pillow. At the grip on his arm Dr. McGregor turned his head and saw—Scott.

As quick as lightning he shut the door and they both stood outside it. What ailed Scott? He was gazing at that shut door with a dumb look of horror, and then he staggered backwards and hid his head in his hands.

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"What is it, my boy? What is it?" asked McGregor.

Scott lifted his face and his eyes were haggard: they were not young any longer—they would never be young again.

"McGregor—" he said, "I——knew her."

Dr. McGregor stood looking at him, astounded. There was no mistaking the meaning of the younger man's choking words. He had brought him there as a stranger, as—ah, the tragedy was in that.

"And she?" he said at last, with a curious intonation that showed he was understanding. His assistant answered with a reckless laugh, bitter and like a sob.

"She did not care for me. I know that. I thought I'd got over it long ago. But—to find her again like this—Jessie—Jessie!"

He was silent a little while and then he looked up strangely. "I'm mad," he said; "or—did you say that the only girl I have loved lies in there—dying, and that I was to go through a marriage with her that she might—that she might—for the sake of another man?"

McGregor looked at him compassionately, but already remembering his patient—the woman who was dying behind that door, the woman with the sorrowful, haunting eyes.

"Scott," he said, "it was for her sake I asked you."

He turned away that he might not watch the struggle, but almost immediately he felt a hand on his shoulder.

"You go in first——" said Scott; his voice was hoarse and strange. "I'm not a coward, but—you go first.'

* * * * *

The clergyman had opened his book at the Visitation of the Sick; he turned over the pages rapidly to find the Marriage Service. He was only to read what was absolutely necessary to fulfil the law. The lawyer and the nurse were standing a little distant, as witnesses, and there was a hush in the darkened room.

"I have brought our friend," said Dr. McGregor hurriedly, bending towards his patient. A faint colour troubled her cheeks; she saw a tall, strange figure approaching her in the shadow and tried to shake hands with him.

"It is very good of you," she said piteously. "Thank you, doctor."

Scott had kept his face turned away, and she hardly looked up as she tried to thank him. He fell on his knees by the bed, and his hand was put into hers.

It was ended. They were husband and wife—until death should part them; and was not death hurrying? She was lying with her face among the pillows, her body a little white ridge along the bed; and she had not glanced at the man whose hand was holding hers very lightly—as strangers' hands might for a little while clasp and part. With a slight effort she withdrew it and he buried his face in the white counterpane. There was a rustle of paper at the other side of the room; the lawyer was preparing the will that she had to sign. He brought it over and spread it out, sheets of blue paper fluttering on the bed. The nurse moved quietly up and placed an arm behind her, putting the pen into her fingers.

"What name am I to sign?" she asked. It was then that the realisation of what had happened came to her; her face was young and wistful with its fatal red touch of colour, her lip was like a girl's in its sudden twist of pain.

"What is my name?" she repeated, with a strange attempt at a laugh.

"Scott."

She started, as if the name were familiar, while her fingers travelled mechanically across the paper; and as it was taken away she saw the black head half hidden in the counterpane.

Her breath seemed to stop; her eyes grew suddenly large and dark and eager, as if gazing at a thing too wonderful for this world. The laugh came then with her breath and the sob behind it.

"I said I'd never marry anybody but you—Jack——"

Her voice shook and faltered; the man's arms that were flung round her alone held her back to life.

* * * * *

It was a strange thing, and a mystery to the doctors; but Mrs. Jack Scott did not die, after all.

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"Nothing if not critical."

By St. Clair Simmons.

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JOURNALISTS AT SCHOOL.

By Harry Golding.

THE most important position in the world of letters is commonly supposed to be held by the editor of the *Times*. This is a mistake. The august individual—there may be more than one, though it is hardly believable—who writes the copper-plate headings for the rising generation's copybooks is a person of far greater consequence and influence. We have never met a copybook editor in the flesh, and would much prefer not to; for how could we, whose caligraphy is of the vilest, venture so much as to touch a hand capable of work so immaculate? The unholy contact would be our undoing—or his. But wonderful and admirable as our exemplar undoubtedly is, he owes his unique influence less to the manner of his writing than the matter. We merely admire his craftsmanship: we imbibe his sentiments. It may be that the weighty apothegms he sets so faultlessly before us are filched from other people, but his is all the glory and the responsibility of selection, and it is not too much to say that were he even once to falter in his sacred trust, and to write "Honesty is *not* the best policy," the morals of the nation would be undermined and a catastrophe would be certain. The head of the boy is sometimes said to be wooden, but the comparison is both libellous and unjust. Rather is it to be likened to those jelly-like compounds upon which, if a letter written with a peculiar ink be pressed, you may, by dexterous manipulation, obtain as many copies as you please. Set forth in neat script or gorgeous capitals that "The early bird catches the first worm," and that unexceptionable observation will, by the simple process of copying, so soak into a boy's mind as to become a part of his being. Whether he will get up any earlier in consequence is another matter, but he will, at least, have the light of truth within.

But of all the copybook headings there is none to approach in popularity that time-honoured statement, "The pen is mightier than the sword." How the copper-plate gentleman loves it! Keen-eyed critics may perchance discover a flaw once in a way in other headings, but in this, never. Every *t* is crossed, every *i* dotted, every curve and flourish lovingly elaborated. The sentiment magnifies the writer's office for one thing, it just fills up the line for another, and it is sanctioned by hoary, immemorial usage. But what is its effect? Instead of the healthy, honourable ambition to become Nelsons and Kitcheners, some boys conceive the unnatural and depraved desire to become journalists!

It is well known that "scribblers' itch," once contracted, is like hay-fever, and will have its course. The only palliative is the establishment of a school magazine. In the great public schools these productions are, as a rule, subject to the censorship of a master, with the result that they are as faultless as the *London Gazette*—and as dull. The magazine which is written by boys for boys, is, as we hope to show, an entirely different thing, virile, entertaining, instruc-

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tive, and full of interest from cover to cover. As the circulation is mostly what is known in advertising circles as a "class" one, the scarcity of subscribers being atoned for by their quality, these productions do not often find their way into the outer world, and we need offer no apology for reproducing a few choice items that have recently come under our notice.

A word first as to the *modus operandi*. The youth with the most fertile imagination gets himself elected editor. It is his pleasure as well as his duty to go carefully through the articles sent in by other boys, and to return such as are deemed unsuitable for publication. Juvenile editors who know something of the wicked ways of the literary world make a point of enclosing with rejected contributions a slip setting forth in the most approved style their sense of the honour, and extremely regretting, etc., etc. Thus early in life commences for many a budding author that woeful "return of the rejected," which has been the bane of so many promising careers. Not more than six subjects can as a rule be included in a single number, and when these have been selected the magazine "goes to press." The "press" is generally a "hektograph," or similar manifolding apparatus, and the editor, as often as not, tucks up his sleeves and does his own printing. A plain halfpenny exercise book provides at once cover and paper, and obviates the necessity for binding. No established scale of remuneration exists, but contributors have the privilege of paying for their own copies. The editor likewise works for glory, and is generally out of pocket as well. Advertisements are sometimes obtained, and the half-crown or five shillings wrung from an indulgent pill or soap maker is a welcome addition to the exchequer. In the better class schools, where the pockets of parents are of ample capacity, recourse is sometimes had to real printing, and as much as a shilling is charged for the journal. Boys who have contributed articles are the best customers, as they calculate astutely that Aunt Susan or Cousin Jane is certain on beholding so astounding an evidence of precocity to send a gushing letter of congratulation, and, what is of far more importance, a substantial tip. Indeed, it is not unusual to come across articles which have manifestly been "written up" with this end in view. Of such a kind is the essay on "The Inconvenience of £200 a Year," which affects to describe how much happier one Mr. Listless would have been had he not inherited an annuity of this amount, and concludes with the following magniloquent advertisement: — "If any person burdened in this manner has been convinced by our reasoning, and would like to be relieved of his burden, we do hereby proclaim ourselves willing to comply with his wish, and in the spirit of true friendship to take the same upon ourselves. *N.B.*— Office open for communications from 10 to 4. *Smaller amounts received.*"

PREHISTORIC WELLINGTON.—NOT BY MR. E. T. REED.
An illustration from the "Wellington Year Book."

It may be as well, perhaps, to say that all the quotations and facsimiles here given are genuine, and I am hopeful that the Editor of the WINDSOR may be induced to show the originals to callers, provided there are

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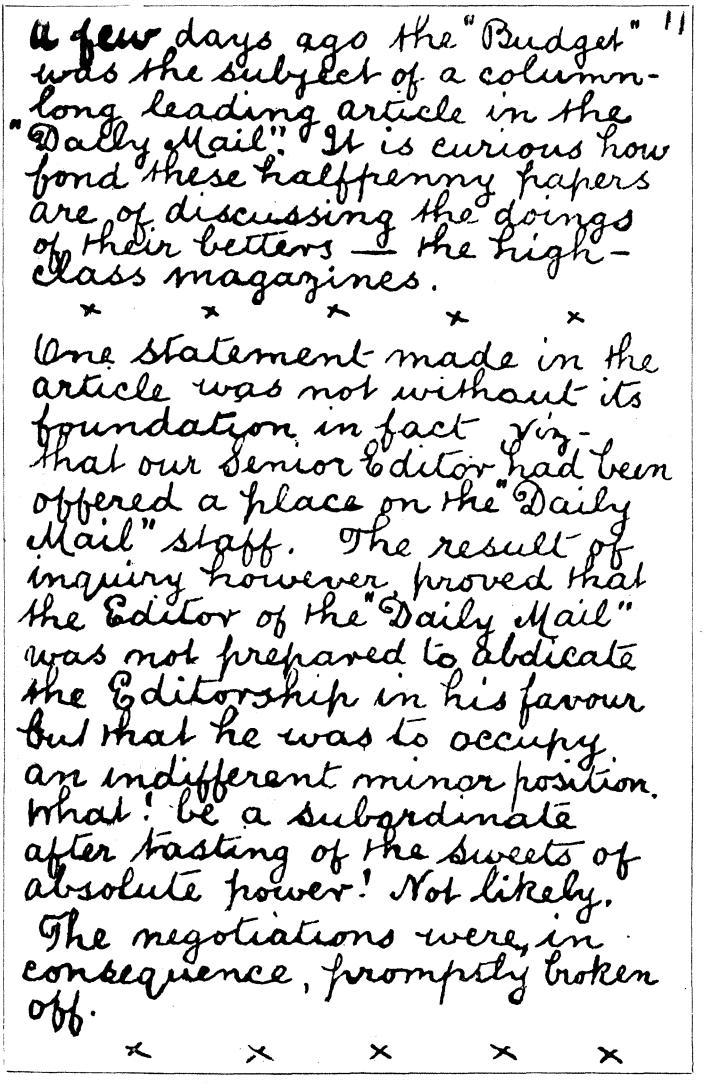
not more than 500 a day. He really hasn't time for more.

We show in facsimile the way the senior editor of the *Horsmonden School Budget* alludes to the offer of an appointment on the staff of a well-known morning paper. It may be remembered that this enterprising young journalist was successful in obtaining a two-page article from Mr. Rudyard Kipling at the modest rate of threepence per page. A "Kipling number" now fetches 10*s.* 6*d.*

How very sweet the "sweets of absolute power" must be may be judged from the editor's candid note on the next page.



A few days ago the "Budget" was the subject of a column-long leading article in the "Daily Mail". It is curious how fond these halfpenny papers are of discussing the doings of their betters — the high-class magazines.

× × × × ×

One statement made in the article was not without its foundation in fact viz. that our Senior Editor had been offered a place on the "Daily Mail" staff. The result of inquiry however proved that the Editor of the "Daily Mail" was not prepared to abdicate the Editorship in his favour but that he was to occupy an indifferent minor position. What! be a subordinate after tasting of the sweets of absolute power! Not likely. The negotiations were, in consequence, promptly broken off.

× × × × ×

"NOT LIKELY!"

What would not newspaper editors give to be able to "rejoice muchly" in the same way! But the law of libel is apparently inoperative against infants, else surely the subject of the following "par" would be moved to invoke it :—

> If by any chance this should meet the eye of Samuel Jones, Esquire, let him be informed that to smile out of the corner of his eye when his governess sentences him to solitary confinement in the bathroom is one of the blackest of sins. We are sorry to see him start so early on his career of crime.

The unfortunate Samuel Jones, Esq., comes in for further notice in a later issue, the aid of the artist being also called in. The occasion was a great strawberry feast, which we are pleased to learn was a "huge success from both a social and a festive point of view." The editor calculates that he said "How do you do? Nice afternoon, isn't it?" to over a hundred guests. Two of the guests are depicted, as well as the aforesaid Jones.

Leslie Noakes would also seem to have some ground for complaint. He is thus tenderly alluded to :—

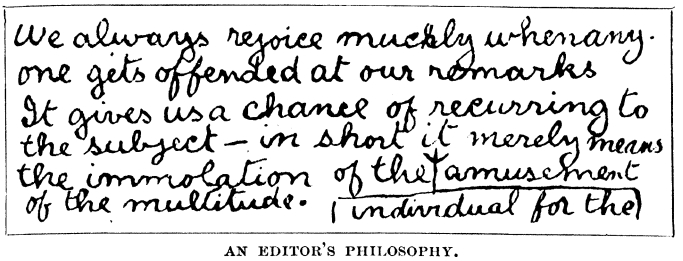
> The youngest boy in the school is Leslie Noakes. We were fully aware of it, but he has written to inform us of the fact and has submitted a list of six older boys "off whom," to use his own expressive language, "I think I can knock spots." Mr. Sindall caught him trying to "knock spots off" one of them a few days later, and after hearing the mass of contradictory evidence on both sides, bound over the combatants to keep the peace.

The advertisements, like the magazine, have evidently been skilfully "edited." Samuel Jones, Esq., it will be observed from the specimen on page 326, is in for it again.

We fear too much space has already been given to one journal, but it would be ungracious to leave the subject without reproducing the portraits of the editors, which

they are themselves good enough to provide. The scene is still the strawberry feast.

Another youthful journal, which circulates in a school in the north of London, is probably not known to many of our readers. That this is not due to lack of enterprise and business management on the part of its conductors will be apparent from the following :—



AN EDITOR'S PHILOSOPHY.

NOTICE ! ! !

Wanted at once, several agents for all parts of the country. All agents selling six copies will receive 1 for themselves ; agents can be male or female.

Order early for next number, as only sixty copies will be printed, which will be ready December 25.

Who would not, whether male or female, gladly sell six copies to receive "1 for themselves," when it is mentioned that with the number is given gratis "a splendid painted picture of a very common English butterfly" ? "Our contributors must not be disappointed," says the editor, "if it (the magazine, presumably, not the butterfly) only lasts for the winter months. The storyettes are not all warranted original, but we shall be very pleased to receive any contributions, which if thought good enough will be inserted in due course."

An attempt is made to reproduce in facsimile a page containing a "painted picture," possibly the missing Khalifa, but the facilities at our disposal are, alas, not equal to those enjoyed by the editor of the paper. We can but print in black, and justice is not done to the originals, if that term can be applied to impressions obviously obtained from coloured "transfers."

Impecunious journalists may be recommended to turn their attention to the same publication. The editor gives notice of a great prize competition.

The prize to be 1*d*. The person who sends us in the best story for his or her age will be awarded the prize. The authors must not show their storys to anyone and must not communicate with the judges. You must not write your name on your tale, but put the number of your coupon in the top right hand corner of your tale.

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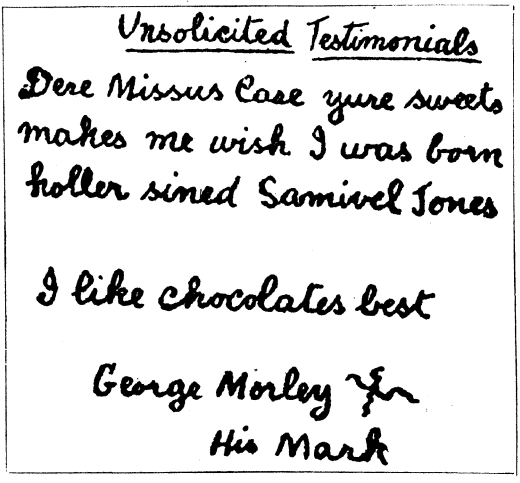
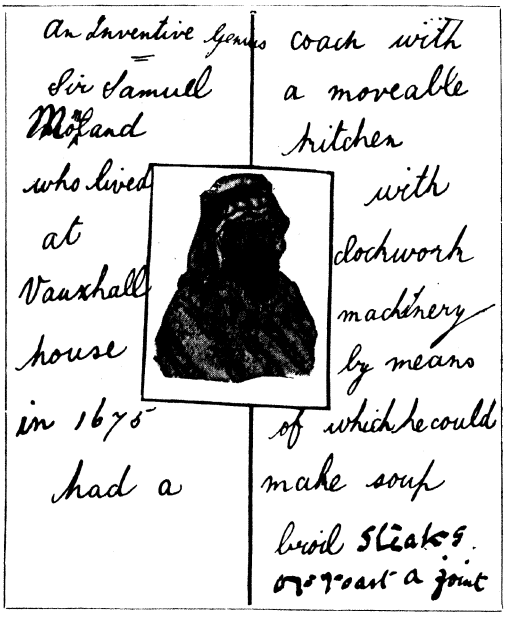


AN ADVERTISEMENT.

The value of the magazine is enhanced by the fact that—

> Any person who is killed in a railway accident and who has a copy of this magazine on him at the time for that month will have his next of kin sent 1*d*. Insurance, or in the case of serious disablement, the splendid sum of ½*d*. Buy your Number and you will be insured for a month.

In the issue containing this generous announcement is a full-page plate representing his Majesty Lobendula (why so spelt we do not know), the late King of Matabeleland, "which was taken from life." The other sketch is self-explanatory.



A COLOURED "SUPPLEMENT."

It is not surprising, considering its fine literary flavour and artistic excellence, that this venture has met with sufficient public support to enable the conductors to purchase some real type and a real press. The art of "comping," however, is not learnt in a day, and the editor, while

HORSMONDEN TRAGEDY — THE TRIUMPH OF TOWSER.

giving specimens of his skill, is forced to confess

> There is not time to get the magazine done in a month, so in future it will come out every two months. The next number will come out on the 25 March.
> If I can get some light blue paper I will have the next number covers that colour like Our Playtime and Hobbys used to be as I dare say some of you remember. We sold 45 of the December numbers which was a great increare.

The End

> P. S. I can work faster now so next number will come out on the 25 February

The P.S. is often the best part of a letter, and we welcome its appearance here, as evidencing both the editor's increased proficiency and his anxiety not to disappoint his thirsting patrons.

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It may not be good policy to make two entirely contradictory statements on one and the same page, but, after all, the fault is common enough in journalism.

We are sorry to note, however, that success has brought "Hooleyism" in its train, and the concern is now to be turned into a limited liability company. The statement that a second new press is required, is, to say the least, suspicious. The prospectus gives no particulars as to past profits, and one looks in vain for the names of titled directors; but there seems to be a big rush for the shares, as, in answer to our request for sixpennyworth, a form has been sent stating that "applications will be dealt with in order of priority."

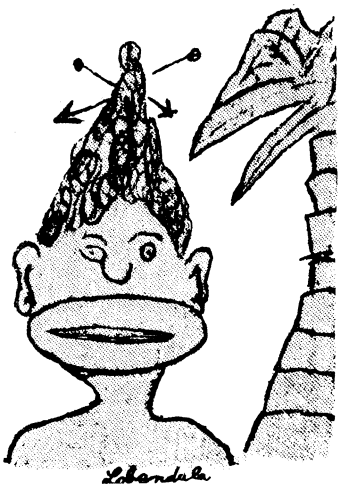
EDITORS NOTES.

Dear Friends

This is our Xmas. Number, and it is a great advance upon any previous one. Sixty copies have been printed and fourty four are already ordered which is three times as many as last time. The printing is not very good but I hope next month it will be much better as it is going to be formed into a Limited Company so that funds can be got to buy a new press; THIRTY shares will be issued at sixpence each

Applications for shares received now.

The illustration reproduced on the opposite page from the *Horsmonden School Budget* is obviously of local interest. We do not know exactly which part of the picture is tragedy, and which triumph, but the humour of it is irresistible. Whether Towser, whoever he may be, thinks so is another matter.



But, after all, the supreme test of merit in a modern magazine is the quality of its fiction. To say that boys are excellent story-tellers exposes us to the risk of being misunderstood. In the less honourable sense of the word, it is well known that they are hopelessly eclipsed by girls. George Washington, for instance, simply *couldn't* tell a lie, though he did his best. We repeat, *verbatim*, a thrilling story entitled, "Tossed by a Bull," by way of showing what a third standard boy can turn out when provoked.

There was a bull-fight in the Colosseum. The Roman citizens and the Cæsar in his purple robe were there. The gladiators were there also, among them a young man, on him the gaze of the populace was fixed. The bulls entered and gazed around. Then one of the largest bulls singled out the youth, and rushed at him, flaunting his scarlet cloak in the bull's face, as it rushed blindly on he plunged his short sword into its heart. As he did so another bull charged him from behind and tossed him, and he fell bruised and bleeding at the feet of the Cæsar. The latter ordered him to be taken to his palace, and he was carefully tended there. When he had recovered he explained to the emperor that his father a patrician had been exiled by the Emperor's predecessor. The Emperor knew that he had been exiled unjustly, and he not only annulled the decree of banishment but restored his estates which had been forfeited.

There is an absence of *motif* in this story which somewhat detracts from its value as a work of art, but the same cannot be said of the thrilling narrative which follows:—

OUR SHORT STORY. (*Original.*)

THAT BURGLAR.

Constable Double X 43 had never been able to capture a real live burglar, those kind of gentlemen never having come in his way. He wanted to catch one very much, as it might go towards his being promoted. It was a dark evening in December and Double X 43 was on

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night duty, when he saw a man remarkably like a housebreaker about to enter a house by the window. Without thinking, our friend went up behind the burglar and gave him such a blow on the head that it stunned him. He then called for help and the burglar was carried to the station. Just as he was being taken before the inspector his wig fell off, and the inspector said "Why it's Detective Knowles." And so it was the detective was just about to catch a real burglar, when he was stopped by the stupid policeman. *Double X 43 is a cat's meat man now.*

The tragic climax is delightful. It may be remembered that such an incident actually occurred in connection with the attempts at train-wrecking near Wellingborough last September, two detectives struggling for nearly an hour to arrest each other. It is only fair to the author of the story to say that his magazine was in circulation long before that date. The story of the "leathern case," or the "Barge Boy's Reward," is obviously inspired by the copybook editor, but is good reading, none the less :—

OUR ORIGINAL STORY.

THE BARGE BOY'S REWARD.

A few year's ago on the banks of one of the London canals might have been seen a boy about 14 years of age leading a horse that drew a coal barge. The poor boy was an orphan and had been brought up to this kind of life. As he went dragging through the mud his eye suddenly caught sight of a leathern case partly covered by the mud. He thrust it into his pocket and thought no more about it until he was going to bed that evening when he opened the case and found it contained a number of papers which as far as he knew were worthless. However being a sensible lad he kept them. A few months after Ben heard of a situation open for an attendant to an invalid gentleman and being recommended by his employer got the birth. Ben's new master's name was Hardy Nicholl and he treated Ben more like a friend than a servant. One day Ben told Hardy about the leathern case and told him the story about it. On looking at the papers in the case, Hardy found some of the greatest importance to himself. These proved of such great value that Ben as his reward was put at a good school and in after years became partner with Hardy in his famous business house.

The moral of this story is that boys, especially orphans, should keep all they find. But luck is unequally distributed in this world. Many a time have we dragged through the mud on the banks of a London canal, and often boated on the murky and malodorous waters of the same, but beyond a few choice additions to our vocabulary, arising out of altercations with the bargemen, we have picked up nothing.

While on the subject of ethics, it may be as well to introduce a prize essay recently contributed to the excellent school journal published at the Vicarage Road, Plumstead, Board School. We have nothing but admiration for the journal, the school, and the headmaster, at whose expense the paper is published. It is one of the most remarkable journals in London, as showing what kindly encouragement and sympathy are capable of doing with unpromising material. The fathers of most of the boys, it may be explained, are employed in Woolwich Arsenal. A thick border has been placed round this model composition, and we advise all fathers and mothers to purchase two copies of the WINDSOR for February, so that this item may be cut out and framed. It should be so placed that a boy's eyes will first rest on it when he awakes. Very fractious or selfish youths may be made to copy it out two or three times before breakfast. They will prefer helping their mothers.

Five shillings worth of books were recently offered in connection with the journal for the best answer to an advertisement offering a situation in an auctioneer's office. One boy declared himself "fit for anything";

HOW A BOY MAY BEST HELP HIS MOTHER WITHOUT STAYING AWAY FROM SCHOOL.

At the commencement of the day, a boy should make a good start by being up early and lighting the fire. Then, while the kettle is boiling, he should clean his own boots and those of his younger brothers and sisters, and get himself ready for school. By the time these matters are attended to the kettle would be boiling, and he could make the tea, or coffee, for breakfast. He could also cut the bread-and-butter. After breakfast he could run short errands, perhaps to the grocer, or butcher, and then get off to school in good time. School being over, it would be his duty to hurry home to see if his mother needed anything done—such as taking his father's dinner, or he might assist in preparing the dinner. After school, in the evening, he could play for a little while and then run home and help in getting the tea ready. After tea, if mother desired, he could take his younger brothers for a walk, and, at the proper time, bring them home, and help in getting them to bed. At times his mother might be unwell, and then, in addition to the ordinary morning duties, he could take her a cup of tea before she rises, and also have the sole charge of preparing the morning meal and getting the children ready for school. Then, on washing-days he should rise a little earlier and light the copper fire. In the evenings, too, when mother is sewing, he might make her duties lighter by relating the incidents of the day, or reading to her.

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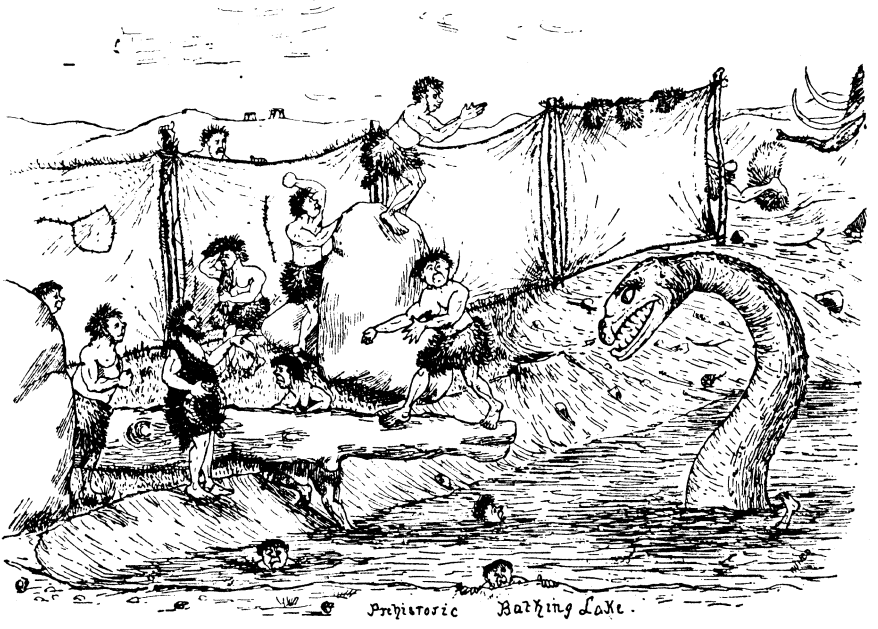
another that "his smartness and modest bearing had generally commended him to his friends." A third prided himself on being "very good at counting out money," while a fourth was "smart enough anyhow." The wages required varied from 4*s.* 6*d.* a week up to £36 a year! One boy wrote, "You are wanting an office boy, so I wish to *office* myself." Is this intended for a joke? asks the editor. Clearly the boy meant that the berth had no allurements for him, and that he wished to *efface* himself, which he did, very effectually. Asked how they would spend half-a-crown, one lad said he would take his mother for a tram ride to Greenwich, have a good "blow out" at the coffee tavern, and spend the remaining penny in cherries. Another wanted "a pair of leggings to keep my stockings free from mud all the way down our street." In reply to the conundrum, "Why is a member of Parliament like a shrimp?" (because he has M.P. at the end of his name), one very smart boy replies, "Because when he gets into hot water he changes his colour!" That young man will be heard of again: he has already mastered one of the first principles of politics—and of journalism.



A PREHISTORIC BATHING LAKE, AS PICTURED IN THE "WELLINGTON YEAR BOOK."

In the experience of Roger Ascham, "the best learned and the best men when they be old were never commonly the quickest of wit when they were young." Surely things have altered since old Roger's day! The specimens we have given, and the many more we might give, if space permitted, show at least that there is plenty of talent amongst journalists still at school, and it will be strange if some of them do not achieve distinction in after life. We have no hesitation whatever in predicting a brilliant career for the author of the following; "Master Pepys Hys Diary for Jan^ry 21st beyinge Hys 1st daye at schoole. Was woke this mornynge at 7 o' clocke or thereabouts by greate ringynge of bell. Did get up and dresse, puttynge on my newe plumme-colored breeches with ye red stripe—(very fine) and my blue satyn handkerchief boughte last Wednesdaye was 5 weekes. Whilst dressynge did have slippers throwne at my heade for usynge another Boy hys bason, which did thinke very harde, as were ye slippers. . . . . After this toe Evenynge schoole and at ½ past eighte up toe bedde. And, Lord! toe see how much of my pomatum and tooth powder had disappeared since ye mornynge. Was tolde by ye biggest boy that ye cat it did always eat up ye newe boys their thinges, and did wonder at ye sagacity of brute beastes in general and school Cats in particular. Had bolsteres thrown at my head, whereat much angered and soe to sleepe and did dream of home."

The two clever "prehistoric" sketches, in the manner of Mr. E. T. Reed's *Punch* triumphs, which accompany this article, are reproduced from the *Wellington Year Book*, which, needless to say, is a publication of a vastly superior character to those we have been describing. It is edited by one of the masters, with assistance in the way of photographs, etc., from past and present boys.

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STORIES OF THE GOLD STAR LINE.

By L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace.

Illustrated by Adolf Thiede.

No. III.—THE RICE-PAPER CHART.

IT was on the 30th of April, 1889, that I landed at Tilbury charged with an extraordinary mission. Six months previously I had been transferred from the *Morning Star* to her sister ship the *North Star*, which was then running on the same lines as the British India Fleet, and instead of returning home from Sydney by way of Adelaide and Albany, we went north, up the Queensland coast, past New Guinea, through Torres Straits to Batavia, and through the Straits of Sunda, past the remains of the volcanic island Krakatoa.

I was glad of the change and the opportunity of visiting new ports and seeing fresh places. At Thursday Island, our first place of call, I went ashore and made my way to the little hotel on the hill. Here amongst a number of traders at the bar I ran across an old friend, a Dutch skipper, one Hans Nausheim. I was glad to see him, and we sat down and entered into conversation. He told me that he was now the owner of a few pearling boats, and had done fairly well for himself. He had only returned to Thursday Island on the previous day from one of his expeditions.

"I am glad you happened to call, Mr. Conway," he said, "for I have something which I am anxious to show you. You can, I dare say, give me your opinion as to what I shall do with it." As he spoke he opened a leather pouch slung at his belt, and from one of the pockets drew out a dirty and crumpled piece of Chinese rice-paper, which he proceeded carefully to unfold and smooth out upon the table.

I looked at it with some curiosity.

"What is it?" I asked.

"It is evidently intended to be some sort of chart," he answered, "drawn apparently from memory of an island in the Banda Sea south of New Guinea. Whoever did it must have had some rough idea of the island, and with that memory has made the best job he could, though his latitude and longitude are all wrong."

"But how did this thing come into your possession?" I asked.

"That is the curious part. It was found by one of my Kanakas on one of the small, uninhabited islands, and he brought it to me. He discovered it on the dead body of a Malay, wrapped in a piece of waterproof of European manufacture."

"And do you suppose it to be of any importance?" I asked.

"That is for you to decide," was his answer. "It is evidently the work of an Englishman, and there is just the ghost of a possibility that it means more than meets the eye. You see this small hole in the left corner of the chart; it has evidently been made intentionally, and at the back there is some writing in English. Most of the words have faded by exposure, but certain letters are plain enough. They have evidently been written with a pointed stick smeared with the juice of the papala tree. Here they are, you can read them for yourself. I don't know that you can make sense, but as far as they go they are plain enough."

I bent over the dirty and almost obliterated chart, and made out quite distinctly on its back the following letters:—

HEOBALD
NGTON
LONDON.

These letters were all written in large capitals, and below them were faint marks of a sentence which was now quite unintelligible.

"I have been puzzling over the thing for a day or two," continued my Dutch friend, "and I do believe there is something in it. The hole is probably meant to mark the island, for all the lines seem to point to this one spot. As doubtless you know, Mr. Conway, thousands of islands are scattered

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over the Banda Sea. The chart is the work of an Englishman, beyond doubt, but who he is and where he is it is almost impossible to guess. Except the one word London nothing else is legible. What do you think of it?"

"It is interesting," I answered, "and the name which is partly obliterated doubtless stands for Theobald. No other letter but 'T' would fit on to that 'H' and make sense. It is just possible, Nausheim, that with the help of a London directory the unknown person for whom this chart is meant may be discovered. If you would care to trust it to me, I will take it with me and look through the directory when I reach London."

"Very well," he answered after a pause, "I will trust you to do this; but remember, Mr. Conway, I am a poor man. If anything should come of this chart—I mean, if it should prove of value—you will not forget me."

"I will give you my word on that," I replied, "and will promise to let you know at once if I find anything out. A letter addressed to you here, care of the post office, will be pretty certain to find its billet?"

"Yes, for I call here pretty often," he answered. "You can take the chart, Mr. Conway."

I carefully folded up the precious paper and thrust it into my pocket. A moment or two later I left the old skipper, and going on board the *North Star* locked the chart in my strong-box.

Our voyage was without adventure and we reached Tilbury in good time. On the very day of my arrrival in London I called at the General Post Office, asked to be allowed to look at a directory, and began my search. Beyond doubt the first name on the half-obliterated chart was Theobald, and the second might refer to Islington, Kensington, Paddington, Newington, or Kennington. My first task was to discover how many Theobalds there were in these districts. I found fourteen in all, three of whom lived in Islington, three in Kensington, four in Paddington, two in Newington, and two in Kennington. I noted down the various addresses of these people and determined to start immediately on my round of investigation. The mystery of the chart began to interest me much, and as I had nothing special to do, I determined not to leave a stone unturned to follow it up.

I began my search in Kennington, visiting all the people whose addresses I had taken, but without result. I then visited Paddington, Islington, and Newington, and in these places also my search was fruitless. No one evinced the slightest interest in my story; on the contrary, all seemed to resent my inquiries and look upon me with a certain amount of suspicion which they took but little pains to disguise, and nowhere could I get a clue to the identity of the maker of the chart. It was on the morning of the third day that I found myself in Kensington. I had only three addresses left; one of these was in the High Street and belonged to a man who kept a tobacconist's shop. I called on him first, with the usual result. There were now but two more, one in the direction of Hammersmith, and one in South Kensington. After a brief hesitation I decided to give the more aristocratic address the preference. I went down Wright's Lane, therefore, and soon found myself in that quarter of dismal squares and so-called gardens which constitute the mass of buildings in this part of London. The address which I had in view I will call, for the purpose of this story, Rosemary Gardens; and when I reached number fifteen, on the afternoon of

"I apologised for my intrusion."

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that day, I felt a sense of satisfaction at being so near the end of my quest. If the two last addresses turned out fruitless there was nothing further to be done.

As I mounted the steps which led to the large house in Rosemary Gardens I roughly estimated the rental to be about three hundred a year. The name of the owner I saw in my note-book was a Mr. Morris Theobald. A staid butler replied to my ring, and on my inquiring for his master ushered me without any comment into a well-furnished library. He then took my card and left me. A few moments later the door was opened and an elderly man with a muscular and well set-up figure entered the room. I apologised for my intrusion and immediately told him the object of my visit.

"I am looking for someone of your name," I said, "in order to throw light on a mystery." I then told him of the chart and asked him if he could help me. He was standing with his back to the light and I found it impossible to scrutinise his features. When I came to the end of my story he said in a quiet tone—

"Do you object to showing me the piece of paper to which you have referred?"

I immediately took the chart from my pocket-book and handed it to him. He scrutinised it closely for a long time in silence, then returned it to me.

"Pray take a seat, Mr. Conway," he said. "What you have told me is extraordinary, and may, of course, be only a curious coincidence, but I must confess that I am much interested in this matter. At what date did the man who gave you this scrap of paper say that he had found it?"

"In the early part of February," was my reply.

Mr. Theobald crossed the room, opened a large bookcase and took down an atlas.

"And how long," he continued, "do you suppose it had been in the possession of the dead Malay?"

"Not long," I answered, "for, from his appearance, the Kanaka who found the chart judged that the Malay was only dead a few days."

"I see that it has been much exposed to the weather," said Mr. Theobald.

"It has," I answered, "although it was covered by a piece of macintosh."

"This is a strange thing altogether," he murmured, "very strange. The more I think of it the less"—he hesitated—"the less I like it."

"What do you mean, sir?" I asked eagerly. "Is it possible that I have really come to the end of my search. Can you really throw light on this queer affair?"

"It is possible," he said. "See"—he laid his finger on the map as he spoke—"this mark on the chart must be somewhere north of the two little islands Teon and Nila."

"How in the world do you know?" I asked.

"It is only due to you, Mr. Conway, that I should tell you more. Remember, there may be nothing in it, and yet, on the other hand, there may be much. God only knows. It is strange, your coming here and singling me out. Sit down; these are the facts." Mr. Theobald motioned me to a chair and seated himself opposite. His face had grown white and all the urbanity of his former manner was now eclipsed by an overpowering anxiety.

"These are the facts," he repeated eagerly. "Last year, in May, a young friend of ours—poor boy, he was almost a son to me—Jack Raynor, left England for Australia. We are large shipbrokers in the City, Mr. Conway, and Raynor was a clerk in my firm. He went to Australia on special business for the firm. Just before his departure my daughter Sibyl, my only child, promised to become his wife, and it was arranged that the marriage should take place when he returned. I am a rich man, and meant to start the young pair comfortably in life. We heard from Raynor from time to time. In his last letter he said he was going for a cruise round the islands in a friend's yacht. And the very next news which reached us was from this man, Mr. Bessemer, saying that poor Raynor was dead—he had been washed overboard in a heavy gale and drowned. Immediately on arriving at Townsville, Bessemer had reported the death and made an affidavit before the magistrate there. I shall not soon forget my poor child's terrible trouble—indeed, we were both fearfully cut up. I do not think Sibyl will ever be the same again. Raynor was a particularly fine fellow—young, handsome, jolly, as good a man as ever breathed."

"But what about this Mr. Bessemer, who took him for the trip?" I asked.

"I have never met him, but he is a great friend of my junior partner, Mr. Cardew. Cardew is a very old friend of my family's. It was he who gave Raynor the introduction to Bessemer. Poor Cardew was terribly upset at the sequel, and we can scarcely get him to allude to the matter, as he says he

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can never forgive himself for being the one who gave the fatal introduction. It is on Sibyl's account that he is so downcast, for he regards my little girl almost as if he were her second father. But now, Mr. Conway, the thing that has struck me is this. Could Raynor by any chance have kept afloat and reached one of the islands, where he is now a prisoner unable to get away? Can he by any means have made this chart, marking it as you see, and then got the Malay to try and take it to some place where it would be likely to be found? It is well known that the Malays are splendid swimmers, and this man might have been able to reach the island, whereas it would have been fatal for Raynor to attempt it. This, of course, I know is all wild conjecture; but the fact is, I shall never rest now till I get to the bottom of the matter."

"If that is the case, I am thankful that I called to see you," was my answer.

"I believe it was Providence who sent you here. We must go without delay into the whole thing. Good God! the boy may be alive, after all!" Here Mr. Theobald rose from his chair and began to pace to and fro with ill-suppressed excitement.

"Dare I tell Sibyl of this?" he continued, lowering his voice. Then he turned to me. "Fortunately, Mr. Conway, my friend Cardew is in town; I will wire to him at once and ask him to come here to meet you. Are you disengaged this evening?"

"Quite," I replied, catching some of his excitement in spite of myself.

"Then be here at eight-thirty, and I will get Cardew to meet you, and we will go carefully into the matter. It must be thrashed out to the bitter end."

When I arrived at Rosemary Gardens for the second time that day I was shown at once into the drawing-room. The room was brightly lighted and looked gay with flowers and many harmonious and softly blending colours. The moment he saw me Mr. Theobald came forward.

"I want to introduce you to my daughter," he said; "come this way." He led me to the other end of the room.

"Sibyl," he said, "this is Mr. Conway, of whom I have been speaking."

A slender and graceful young girl came forward. She was dressed in something soft and white, her eyes were dark, and her whole appearance was extremely delicate and ethereal. Her features were cut almost with the clearness of a cameo, and I saw at a glance that if health and happiness were hers she would be very beautiful. As she glanced at me now her lips trembled and her eyes swam in tears.

"You don't know what you have done for me," she said eagerly; "you have given me back hope. Father says you know something about Jack. Come and let us talk things over."

She led me to a small sofa, seated herself, and invited me to take a place by her side.

"Now tell me, tell me everything," she cried.

"But, my dear young lady, I have very

"'The "N" in that letter is a facsimile of the "N" on the back of the chart.'"

little to tell. That chart may or may not have been Raynor's work."

"Oh, I am certain it is," she answered. "I have often dreamt that he was alive, and now this chart proves my dreams to be true. But here comes Mr. Cardew; you must be introduced to him." She stood up as a squarely built, dark man of about five-and-thirty years of age approached us.

"I have been telling Mr. Cardew about your splendid news, Mr. Conway," she continued, "and he is almost as glad as I am."

"If there is any truth in the news which

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you have brought, Mr. Conway, I am much pleased," said Cardew. He spoke in a gentle, somewhat drawling voice, and his eyes, which were of a light brown, were partly narrowed as he watched me. The next instant I saw him glance at Miss Theobald. As he did so a curious light leaped into his eyes, passing the next instant; but the moment I saw it I guessed his secret. Had no one else suspected it? Was it possible that his love, his desperate love for the beautiful girl by my side, had never been suspected either by her father or herself?

"Yes, Mr. Conway," said our host, who who kept better control over his emotions. He stood perfectly erect, with his hands behind his back, his thin lips pressed together. To an ordinary observer he was a clever-looking and interesting man, with nothing in the least sinister about him; nevertheless, that flash in his eyes when he glanced at Sibyl Theobald had betrayed him to me. I felt sure that all the facts of Raynor's mysterious death were not known to either Sibyl or her father.

"Well, and what do you think of it, Cardew?" said our host, when I had finished speaking.

"'If you will help me, I will make it worth——'"

now also appeared on the scene, "I have broken through my resolve and told my daughter, and also my good friend Cardew, all that occurred this afternoon. The fact is, the matter is too serious to attempt any reserve. Perhaps you will now kindly show Mr. Cardew the chart, and let us hear the whole story over again from your lips."

I removed the chart from my pocket-book and repeated the story that I had told Mr. Theobald earlier in the day. As I was speaking I observed that Cardew glanced now and then at the chart as if he would devour it. But for the queer, restless light in his eyes, I never saw anyone

He did not answer for a moment, then he slightly shrugged his shoulders.

"I think nothing of it," he said, and he uttered the words slowly and with a regretful accent. "Remember," he continued, "I have got Bessemer's letter, in which he says distinctly, 'Poor Jack Raynor was washed overboard in a gale of wind at least ten miles from any land.' You must, therefore, judge for yourselves that it is out of the question that this piece of paper can have anything to do with him."

"How can you possibly say so, Mr. Cardew?" cried the girl. "How do they know that they were ten miles from any land,

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with all those islands round them? Look at the letters on the back of the chart. The first word can only mean Theobald. Mr. Conway has looked up all the other Theobalds in London with the exception, I believe, of one family. Jack was lost in the Banda Sea, where this chart was found. Besides," she added, the colour rushing into her cheeks and then fading away, leaving them deadly white, "there is something which I recognised in the handwriting."

"Oh, come, my darling," said her father, "your hope is too rosy; these are merely printed letters."

"All the same, they were written by Jack," she answered, "I know it well; he always wrote his 'N's' in that peculiar way, always, even in his ordinary handwriting, printing them. I will show you what I mean, I will fetch some of his letters."

She ran out of the room, returning presently with a small packet tied together with a piece of black ribbon. Her fingers shook so much that she could scarcely untie the knot. Presently she opened a letter and pointed in triumph to the very obvious fact that in each case Raynor printed his 'N.'

"There," she said, "the 'N' in that letter is a facsimile of the 'N' on the back of the chart. Any expert, I am sure, would tell you that they were written by the same hand. Oh, yes, the chart was made by him, and he is alive. We must go and search for ourselves; you will take me, father, won't you?"

Cardew glanced at Mr. Theobald and then looked at Sibyl.

"Ask father to take me," said the girl, turning to him and laying her hand on his arm; "you can persuade him—do. He will consent if you ask him."

"I would gladly ask your father to do so if it were the least use, Sibyl," was Cardew's reply; "but as things stand, and knowing what I do, it would be a mere waste of time and money."

"Money!" retorted the girl, "what does money matter; and if it took ten years it would be time well spent. I bore the trouble as best I could while there was no hope, but now I shall not know a moment's rest until this thing is cleared up."

"Everything possible shall be done, Sibyl," said her father; "but it is scarcely necessary that we should go ourselves; we can employ men to search the islands with the aid of the chart."

"No, no," she cried; "we must go ourselves—you and I, father—and at once."

I turned to Mr. Theobald.

"You fully understand my position, sir," I said. "I in no way guarantee the genuineness of the chart; I know nothing about it except what the Dutch skipper has told me. Anything you do is entirely on your own responsibility."

"I quite understand, Mr. Conway; but, as things are, there is no reason why my daughter and I should not take this trip; it will set our minds at rest. If Sibyl wishes it so earnestly, I am quite willing to undertake the affair."

"Then, in that case," I answered, "if you really desire to go, you could not do better than come with me in the *North Star*—at any rate, as far as Batavia. After that you can make what arrangements you like for the search. We shall sail from London on the 17th."

"Let us decide to do it," cried the girl. "Oh, it would be splendid!"

"Very well; I will go carefully into the matter," said her father, "and to-morrow morning will consult Ferrers, our business man. In the meantime, Mr. Conway, please accept my sincere thanks for all the trouble you have taken."

Soon afterwards I took my leave, Cardew accompanying me.

"I am going to my club," he said suddenly. "If you have nothing better to do, will you come with me? This is an extraordinary affair, and I should like to talk it over with you."

"I will come, with pleasure," I replied. We called a hansom, got into it, and drove to the club. When we got there Cardew ordered supper, and over the meal proceeded to discuss the situation.

"I will be quite frank with you, Mr. Conway," he said. "I do not approve of this wild-goose chase. The chart, as far as Raynor is concerned, is worthless."

I interrupted him.

"One thing, at least, is clear," I said. "It is the work of an Englishman, and the words on the back allude to a person of the name of Theobald."

"That may be the case; but they do not allude to Mr. Theobald of Rosemary Gardens."

"They allude to someone of the name of Theobald who lives in Kensington, Paddington, Islington, Kennington, or Newington," I answered. "I have seen, with one exception, the Theobalds in those five quarters; your Mr. Theobald is the only one who takes the least interest in the matter."

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He drummed impatiently with his hand on the table.

"Let me look at the thing once more," he said.

I unfolded the chart, and, stretching across the table, held my hand partly on it as he examined it. He did so very gravely, then pushed it back to me.

"I would give a good deal that they did not go," he said.

"Why?" I asked suddenly.

He shot an eager glance at me, then looked round him. There was no one near.

"I will tell you a secret which I have never before confided to living man," he replied. "Before God I fully believe that Raynor is dead. The evidence of his death is too absolutely complete for any sensible person to attach the least importance to that piece of paper. Sibyl has very strong feelings; she was nearly mad with grief when he died. That grief has now quieted down, and she was just beginning to accept the inevitable. Your appearance on the scene has revived her old sensations and given her hope—false hope. Yes, before God," he added, speaking with great bitterness, "the hope is false—false as hell! and, sir, it interferes with me—with me!"

"With you?" I said.

"With me; for I love her to madness. I have loved her for years. That boy, who had not yet cut his wisdom teeth, came in my way. I had not spoken, I had not dared to, but he stepped in and won her. God, what I suffered! But I kept my emotions to myself, and no one guessed. Mr. Theobald knows nothing of this, nor does Sibyl. The lad went away and—died. I shall win her yet, but this trip interferes with me. Do you understand?"

I bowed without making any answer. He stared fixedly at me as if he would read me through; then, bending across the table and laying his hand within an inch of mine, he continued—

"Mr. Conway, I would do much, much to prevent Sibyl starting on this voyage. If you will help me, I will make it worth——"

I started back.

"I cannot interfere," I said. "I have stated my case; I have shown the chart to the Theobalds; it is for them to decide."

"Say no more," he answered. "It was in your power to do a great deal—and I am rich and powerful, and could have——" He broke off abruptly—his face was the colour of chalk. "I see it is useless to ask you," he said finally.

"It is," I replied. "In a place like the Banda Sea, which is full of islands, there is a possibility of Mr. Raynor being alive. The more Mr. Theobald thinks over this matter, the more anxious he will be to follow up this possibility. I am sorry for you, Mr. Cardew, and I will, of course, respect your confidence; but beyond remaining neutral in the matter I can do nothing."

"I understand," he said. He remained silent for a moment, evidently in deep thought; then he turned the conversation to indifferent matters.

During the next few days I was in constant communication with the Theobalds, and was often at their house. By my advice Theobald consulted an expert on the value of the chart. This man, on carefully examining it, pronounced it useless unless the explorer already knew something of the position of the island; but, on the other hand, if such a person could be found, the chart might lead to the right island.

The moment I heard this I suggested that we should cable to the Dutchman, who knew all those waters well. This was eagerly agreed to by Mr. Theobald, and accordingly I cabled to Nausheim to meet us at Batavia, telling him that we would be there by a certain date.

Miss Theobald and her father then made eager and hurried preparations for the voyage, and on the evening of the 16th they came on board the *North Star*. I was in my cabin at the time, but a moment later came on deck to receive them. What was my astonishment to see that Mr. Cardew had accompanied them. The moment he saw me he came up and spoke.

"You are surprised to see me here," he said; "but at the eleventh hour I have taken my passage. After all, I found it impossible to remain quietly at home. With such important matters in suspense I felt that I must be in the running at any cost. If Raynor should be still alive there will be no one to give him a more hearty welcome back to the world than I."

As Cardew uttered this barefaced lie I saw him glance at Sibyl. The return of hope had already improved her appearance, the fragile nature of her beauty was less apparent than when I had last seen her. Now, in her travelling-dress, with the wind blowing her soft hair away from her face, her eyes full of light, and a wild-rose colour in her cheeks, she looked as lovely as girl could look. As Cardew uttered those false words she gave him a glance of the purest gratitude. In

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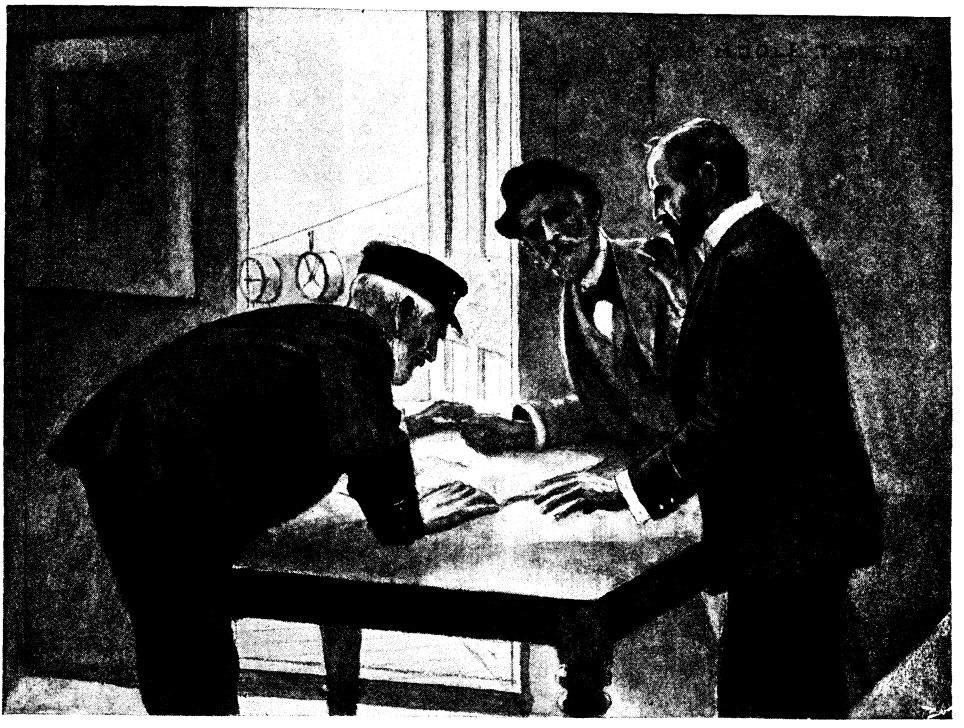

"'What has happened?' I cried suddenly. 'Look at this!'"

reply he gazed at her steadily. Straight into her clear brown eyes he looked, he bit his lip, and his face turned pale. I saw the drops stand out on his forehead. It was marvellous to me that neither Miss Theobald nor her father guessed the state of things. For myself, I by no means liked his accompanying us, and felt immediately that, somehow, in some fashion there was mischief ahead.

The voyage flew by without anything special occurring until one morning we were in the Indian Ocean—Theobald and I had been discussing the chart, and he asked to see it in order to study it in connection with an atlas. As we were both busy over it I was suddenly called on deck. This was the first time that the chart had left my hands. I returned within a quarter of an hour, and Theobald handed me the little piece of rice-paper on which so much depended, folded up in its usual form. I slipped it into my pocket-book and returned it to the place which it invariably occupied in my strong-box.

On the following afternoon we were within twenty-four hours of Colombo. On the morning of that day something took me to my strong-box, and, seeing the chart, I opened it, glanced at it half mechanically, saw that it was all right, and put it back again. On the afternoon of that same day the skipper, Theobald, and I were having tea together, when the conversation drifted to the subject of the chart. Captain Meadows and Mr. Theobald began to differ with regard to the exact point where the island might be supposed to be, and finally I went to fetch the chart in order to compare it with the ship's one in the chart-room on the bridge. We all went to the chart-room, and I there unfolded the chart and laid it on the table. The two men bent eagerly over it.

"Good God! what has happened?" I cried suddenly. "Look at this!" We stared at the chart in absolute bewilderment. Were we all dreaming? No; what we saw was an ugly fact. Across the paper even as we looked there crept a dull, bluish blur that soon fogged the lines and ran the points and marked lines into an indistinguishable smudge.

"What in the name of Heaven does it mean?" I cried. "I looked at the chart this very morning and it was as clear as it had ever been. It is a certain fact that no one has tampered with it since."

"But what is it?" gasped Theobald, his eyes dilating with fear.

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I snatched up a piece of paper and roughly and rapidly tried to reproduce the chart before my visual memory of it had faded. It was all useless. I could not reproduce the lines, and the chart before us was nothing more than waste paper.

Theobald sank down on the nearest chair; his face was white and his strong lips trembled; his own and his daughter's hopes were in one moment dashed to the ground.

What did it mean? Who had done it? By what unforeseen agency had this ghastly change come about?

"It is devilry—devilry!" muttered Theobald, and his face took on a more and more scared appearance. Suddenly he sprang to his feet.

"Where is Cardew?" he cried. "I must tell him of this. God help my child! To bring her so far and then to dash all her hopes is past bearing."

Without another word he turned and left us. Captain Meadows and I looked at each other.

"Why, Conway," exclaimed the skipper, "you look as startled as Theobald himself! Have you any explanation to offer?"

"Except this," I answered—"someone has tampered with the chart."

"Tampered with it?" cried the captain. "But it looked all right when you first opened it."

"It looked all right, certainly, but was all wrong," was my reply. "Yes, it has been tampered with, and, as Mr. Theobald said, the devil is in this matter."

"But do you suspect anyone?"

"I do, Captain Meadows, but I cannot speak of my suspicions at this moment. I will go away and take a turn by myself."

For many an hour that day I paced the hurricane deck, thought after thought coursing through my brain; but, try as I would, nowhere could I get a solution with regard to the tampered chart. What had been done with it? and, above all things, how had it got into the hands of the only man who would be likely to injure it? On one occasion, and one only, I had left it with Mr. Theobald. Had Cardew got hold of it then? It seemed almost impossible to believe that this was the case, but I thought it worth while to make inquiries. I saw Theobald that evening and put the question to him.

"There is no doubt whatever that the chart has been tampered with," I said; "but how and in what way God only knows. I am not a chemist, nor a scientific man, and cannot therefore solve the mystery; but I should like to ask you one question, sir. I left the chart in your possession for a few minutes yesterday; did you by any chance put it into the hands of any other person?"

"No, no," he said. "No, no; Cardew and I never lost sight of it for a moment."

"Cardew!" I cried in dismay; "what had he to do with it?"

"He happened to come into my cabin. Sibyl called me, and I left it in his care. When I came back he was bending over it examining it. He is as much interested in the matter as I am. As I said before, anyone would suppose that Sibyl was his daughter. Why, what is the matter, Conway?"

"I am sorry I left the chart with you," was my reply, and then I became silent. My suspicions were strengthened. Cardew had the chart in his possession for a moment or two. What had he done with it during that time? That he had done something was positive.

It was at six o'clock on the evening of the 14th of June that we dropped anchor in the harbour at Batavia. We all immediately got into the launch and made for the quay. Miss Theobald, still looking bright and happy, was with us. Her father had decided up to the present not to tell her anything about the ruined chart. I believe he had a last lingering hope that the old Dutchman, Hans Nausheim, would help us out of our dilemma. The bright eyes of the girl and her happy, confident manner were hard to bear, for I knew only too well that under existing circumstances the Dutchman could do but little. Straining my eyes towards the port I saw his sturdy figure. Yes, he had kept his appointment faithfully. Cardew, too, was standing at the bows; he did not speak, but gazed steadily at the quay as we drew near to it. The next moment we had all sprung on shore. Hans came forward. I drew him aside, and in a few words told him of the disaster. His face paled.

"It is hopeless, then, Mr. Conway," he said. "I trusted you with the chart—you have not kept your trust as you promised."

"The chart was for the space of ten minutes in the hands of Mr. Theobald," I answered.

"Anyone else, sir?"

"A Mr. Cardew; they are both interested in the success of this voyage."

"Aye, aye, that's as it may be," said the old skipper; "but the chart is ruined, and we cannot get to the island. There is no hope whatever, unless, indeed, I find the Kanaka who discovered the dead Malay.

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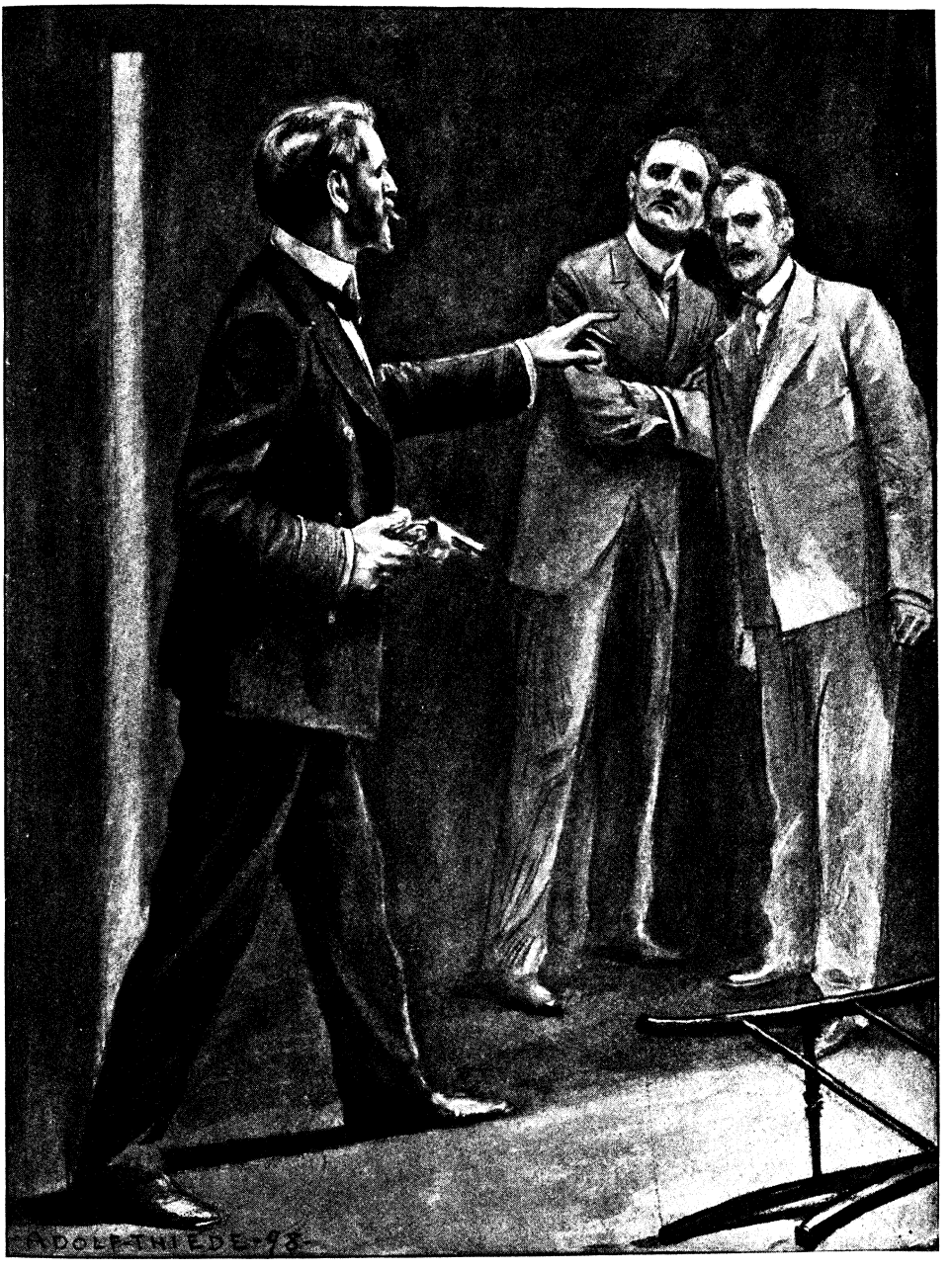

"'You will both be tried for murder.'"

He left my employment some time ago, and has hidden himself Heaven only knows where. I can but search for him."

Meanwhile the rest of the party had gone to the Hôtel des Indes, and I quickly followed them. The hour had come when Miss Theobald must be told.

Theobald drew me aside.

"Can the Dutchman do anything?" he asked in a tremulous whisper.

"Very little, I fear," I replied; "it is your duty, sir, to tell Miss Theobald: you cannot keep her in the dark any longer."

Mr. Theobald looked despairingly round.

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He dashed the moisture from his brow, and suddenly turned to his daughter.

"Come with me, Sibyl, I have something to tell you," he said.

She glanced into his face and her own went white. They disappeared into a private room which he had engaged, and he closed the door behind them.

Meanwhile I sauntered in the direction of the coffee-room. I found Cardew smoking a cigar. When he saw me he took it from his lips.

"What is it now?" he said; "is he breaking the news to her?"

"He is," was my curt reply. "The confounded trick which has ruined Miss Theobald's happiness is being explained to her by her father." I could scarcely add any more, I felt it almost impossible to be civil to the scoundrel. I entered the coffee-room. He followed me. The next moment I was startled by a loud exclamation which dropped from his lips.

"In the name of all that's wonderful, Bessemer, how did you turn up here?" he cried.

A slender, dark man dressed in a suit of white drill came forward.

"My yacht happens to be in the harbour," he replied. "I came in this morning; I have been cruising here, there and everywhere. But what has happened to you? Where have you dropped from?"

Cardew, who by this time had controlled his intense excitement, turned and introduced Mr. Bessemer to me. A waiter appeared; Cardew ordered refreshments and invited me to sit down. There was no help for it but to comply. Cardew then told Bessemer the story of our adventures, and Bessemer sympathised much in the destruction of the chart. Then he said, glancing at me for a moment—

"But in any case it could never have applied to poor Raynor, who beyond all doubt was drowned. We were in a typhoon at the time, and it is marvellous we did not all perish."

"Well, it is wonderful, meeting you here," said Cardew; "I call it no end of luck. I have not heard anything of you for months and months."

As he spoke I saw the two men exchange glances, and I suddenly resolved to watch them as closely as I could.

My room was on the ground floor, and the door opened on to the verandah. The heat that night was excessive, and my nerves were in too active a state to allow me to sleep. I blew out the light and sat down in an easy-chair by the door and gave myself up to anxious thought.

The hours dragged on, everything was still. Suddenly I heard a movement in one of the rooms some little distance down the verandah, and the next moment a small tunnel of light shot from the door across the gravelled courtyard. I quickly saw that this light came from Cardew's room. All my keenest suspicions were alert, and I drew back quickly into my own room. The next moment the light went out, and the soft tread of bare feet fell on my ears. A figure, which I quickly saw was Bessemer's, passed my door. What could this mean? The next instant I had made up my mind. If some clandestine scheme were on foot, I would meet guile with guile. In such a case as this any means would justify the end. I crept softly out, stepped over the verandah, and drew swiftly into the dark shadow of a large cactus that stood in the courtyard. Bessemer had evidently gone into Cardew's room. It was perfectly dark now. Then suddenly I heard Cardew's voice in a passionate whisper—

"My God! it has been a near thing, Henry. What do you reckon is the best thing to do now?"

"Nothing, absolutely nothing. We are safe," was the light reply. "Raynor will never be seen again. But tell me, how did you manage about the chart? Did you work that?"

"Yes," answered Cardew, with a soft chuckle; "I got hold of it for five minutes and did the deed. I saw when that fool of a purser would not be tampered with, that all depended on the chart, and before I left England I went to a chap who is up in this sort of game. He told me exactly what to do. I painted the paper over with iodide of potassium. It looked exactly the same as before, and it succeeded just as he said it would."

"How? What do you mean?"

"Why, when exposed to the ozone in the sea air the iodine was liberated from the iodide and, combined with the starch in the rice-paper, turned it all blue. It is the regular test for ozone—see?"

"Whew! that's the devil's own trick! And they never discovered?"

"No, and never will now."

"But about Raynor," continued Cardew after a pause, "I only guessed what happened; what did you really do?"

"Left him on an island quite out of any

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ship's track. Many thanks for the cheque—it has made me independent for life."

"Do you happen to know where the island is?"

"Rather, never could forget it, could go there blindfold; but I don't want to—you bet. It's all right, we are as safe as——"

But before he had finished his sentence I had leapt across the verandah and was standing between the men and the open door.

"You're safe, are you, you scoundrels?" I cried.

Two violent oaths burst from the men as they staggered back at my sudden appearance. I held up my hand.

"Quiet, both of you; not a word" I said. "If you make the slightest noise I shall rouse the hotel. Now look here, I have heard everything."

"You wretched eavesdropper!" hissed Cardew between his clenched teeth.

"You can call me anything you please," I answered; "but listen. Mr. Bessemer, there is only one course open to you. You take us to the island to-morrow, or you know the consequences. Is it Yes or No?" I looked him full in the eyes. He recovered his equanimity and instantly assumed an air of insolent bravado. I maintained mine of quiet resolution. I knew that he was clever enough to see that his game was up.

"You had better be careful, Mr. Conway," said Cardew at last. "It is never safe to tempt desperate men. We are two against one, remember."

I quickly slipped a revolver from my pocket.

"I did not come unprepared," I said. "There is no hope for either of you, if you, Mr. Bessemer, refuse to take us to the island. I have heard all; I know the trick of the chart, too. You will both be tried for murder."

"Hush!" said Bessemer, standing up quickly. "Put down that revolver; we won't touch you, of course. If I do what you ask, what guarantee have I that you won't give me away after all?"

"My word for what it is worth, and I believe I can answer for Theobald. If Raynor is alive you shall both go free."

"What do you say, Cardew?" muttered Bessemer. But Cardew said nothing. He continued to gaze at me and took no more notice of Bessemer than if he had not existed.

"Well, Mr. Conway, you leave me no alternative," said Bessemer at last; "but remember, this matter will not stop here. I shall claim my satisfaction from you for your underhanded spying. You shall pay for this some day."

I laughed. Bessemer looked again at Cardew, who still remained silent. Bessemer then left the room. As he did so an idea struck me. I went hastily to my own room, took a chair from there, and placing it by his open door, sat down.

"What do you mean by that?" he said angrily.

"Oh, nothing particular," I answered. "It is a hot night, that's all."

He knew well enough why I had done it, and I knew, too, that he was too valuable to leave him any chance of escape.

During the remainder of that night I sat by Bessemer's open door, and all that night also I kept my revolver in my hand. I was determined not to lose sight of Bessemer for a single moment until Theobald appeared. To my great relief at early dawn I heard him come out on to the verandah. I then beckoned him to me.

"I have discovered everything," I said. "Help me to watch Bessemer; he must not escape. Now listen."

I then told him in Bessemer's presence what had occurred. The poor fellow's excitement, rapture, and relief are beyond my powers to describe. Cardew's treachery was forgotten in his joy about Sibyl.

"Her life will be spared; nothing else matters, she will be happy yet," he cried. "Yes," he added, turning to Bessemer, "if you take us to the island you shall go free."

"Do not lose sight of him, Mr. Theobald," I said. "I am going now to find Cardew." I went to Cardew's room and knocked, but there was no answer. I opened the door and entered. I found him lying across his bed as if asleep. A glance showed me that he had not undressed. A further glance drew me to his side. I bent over him. I touched him, and started back. He was dead!

"Suicide," I murmured. Yes, his game was up, his passion could never be realised. He had doubtless provided himself with means of escape should his worst fears be realised. An empty bottle lay by his side.

Early that day we started in Bessemer's yacht in search of Jack Raynor. How we found him, Sibyl's delight, the story he had himself to tell of his marvellous escape, all belong to another tale than this.

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B. L. FARJEON AT HOME.

By Mary Angela Dickens.

THERE is one man at least in London at this present time who is literally possessed and dominated by the impulse towards literary creation, and that man is Mr. B. L. Farjeon! There are men among us who write for money; there are men who write for fame; there are men who write because they think, upon deliberation, that they have something to say. But Mr. Farjeon writes, primarily, because he must, because he is "rushed along"—as he himself expresses it—by that within him over which he has no control.

With or without encouragement, whether he had been born a crossing-sweeper or a peer, Mr. Farjeon must inevitably have become known as a writer of fiction. It was so written in the Book of Fate. But his account of the form in which the decree of the powers presented itself to him is so interesting and characteristic—characteristic of both the men concerned—that it must be given here.

"I was in New Zealand at the time," Mr. Farjeon tells you, speaking in that rapid, dramatic way of his. "I was managing and generally running a daily paper in a little bit of a township. There were only eighteen thousand inhabitants, but we published every day as much matter as would fill the *Daily Telegraph*—we did, indeed."—If only it were possible to convey in cold black and white the pride and delight with which Mr. Farjeon speaks and the atmosphere of freshness and vigour about him! It makes you feel that, failing other assistance, he would certainly have written his paper straight off on his own account, and printed and published it, too!—"Well, I wrote a little Christmas story, called 'Shadows on the Snow,' and I dedicated it to Charles Dickens and sent him a copy—I think with a little note. Time passed on until May came. In a bit of a town such as ours was, it's almost like a big family, you know. Everybody knows everybody and everybody's affairs. We had only a little wooden post-office, carried on in a free and easy way, and one morning, when I went down to my business, everybody I met stopped me and said, 'What's Charles Dickens writing to you about?' 'What's Charles Dickens got to say to you?' 'There's a letter for you from Charles Dickens!' I was very much excited, as you can understand, and I hurried into my office, and there it lay—the envelope with 'Charles Dickens' signed on it—he always signed his name outside his letters, you know. That letter decided me. I'd always had half a mind to go in and make a bid for fame, and it decided me. I made up my mind to go to London."

Perhaps it is not surprising that even to-day Mr. Farjeon can repeat that letter almost by heart—the letter of kindly encouragement and appreciation from the veteran to the recruit. The words must have rung in his ears continuously, as he wound up his affairs in the Colony, giving up a flourishing business and casting himself adrift on the ocean where so many men have suffered shipwreck. Mr. Farjeon left New Zealand and came straight to London, but his first act there was not, as that of most young men would have been, to introduce himself in person to Charles Dickens.

"I don't know how it was," he says, "but I didn't go to see him. No, I couldn't, somehow! I had a bit of pride, I suppose, and I thought I'd do something by myself first. I'd been in London some little time when I went to the Olympic one night to see Halliday's adaptation of 'David Copperfield'; and Charles Dickens was in a box. Halliday, who was with him, came down and told me that Dickens had asked who I was and had sent me word that he would be glad if I would go and speak to him. So I went, and he put his hands on my shoulders and said, 'Why have you not been to see me?'"

The explanation, given haltingly and with a touch of embarrassment, was one after Charles Dickens's own heart. That that first meeting would have been followed by many others need not be doubted. But the time of the great parting was approaching for Charles Dickens, and a few months later he was dead.

But now to Mr. Farjeon's methods of work—methods interesting as containing, where such an enthusiast is concerned, the root of the matter concerning the man's life and personality, and interesting also in themselves as being probably almost unique among the methods of conspicuously successful

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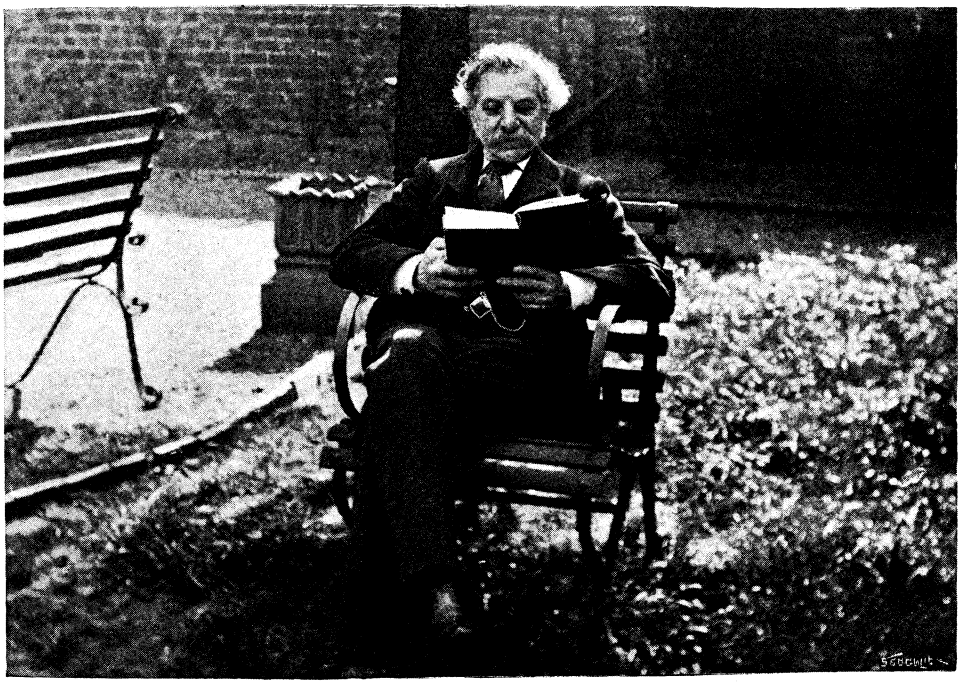
men. Mr. Farjeon is as absolutely in the dark as to the story he is writing—not only when he begins it, but from chapter to chapter—as is the reader who approaches it for the first time. Notes, sketches, plots, are all equally unknown to him.

"Now, I'll tell you," he says, "just to show you how it is. I'll tell you the history of my first great success in sensational fiction, 'Great Porter Square.' I had an order for a serial story—a sensational story it was to be—so many numbers, so many thousand words to a number. The contract was made a long way ahead, and I hadn't thought about a plot, or a



MR. B. L. FARJEON.
Photo by W. H. Bunnett.

title, or anything else, when one morning I got a letter from the people who had ordered it, asking for the title, immediately—by wire, if possible. I was getting up in the morning when I read this letter, and as I shaved I turned the matter over. 'What are you going to do about it?' said my wife. 'Oh,' I answered, scraping and thinking, 'I shall send it.' I scraped a little longer, and then I said, 'What do you think of "A Hundred and Nineteen Great Porter Square"?' 'It's odd,' she said; 'what's it about?' 'I haven't the slightest idea,' I said; and I hadn't. I sent off the title that very day and began the story with no more notion of what it was going to be than—than—this book"—bringing down his hand on to the table by his side. "Each instalment of that story ended with a sensation, and I never knew when I wrote it what the sensation was to lead to. The copy for each instalment—five or six thousand words, I think it was—had to go off every Wednesday morning by the early mail, and I never began to write it until Tuesday. Sometimes, if there were interruptions, I didn't commence until seven o'clock in the evening; but I always posted the copy myself at four o'clock in the morning at Charing Cross, and I always wrote the right quantity to within a few words. I don't think I was five hundred words out on the whole story."

The opened-eyed, almost open-mouthed, amazement with which this account is received draws from Mr. Farjeon an exposition of his theories on the subject.

"You see," he explains, "what I always say is this—we don't do it, we novelists; the whole thing forms itself in our heads and drives us along. It's there all the time, you know, and it simply makes one into a tool. That's how it is, I take it. It was just the same with my first Christmas story—'Blade o' Grass.'

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There was the title. What was the story? Blade o' Grass was a human being, of course. What human being? First I thought it was a boy, and I wrote five thousand words or so like that. Then—no, it was a girl—yes, a girl. The worst time I ever had was just before I wrote 'Joshua Marvel.' I'd accepted an order for a serial—a first class magazine—a big chance; and for the life of me I couldn't think of anything by way of a plot. I almost made up my mind that it was all up with me; that I'd made a frightful mistake, and that I hadn't any more in me. Then, one day, as I was walking along the Strand, feeling pretty miserable, I stopped to look at a 'happy family' that used to be at the bottom of Southampton Street in those days. I stood and looked at it—the birds, and the cat, and all the rest of it—and there and then I saw the first chapter of 'Joshua Marvel.' I went straight home and wrote it as fast as my pen could go, and I've never paused for a plot since."

MR. FARJEON'S WORKING ROOM.
Photo by W. H. Bunnett.

The times and seasons of Mr. Farjeon's work are by no means to be reckoned on. Sometimes he works, to use his own expression, "like a demon" for weeks at a time; sometimes he passes days of absolute inactivity. When his working fits are on him, he does not eat, he does not sleep, he has no independent existence whatever. It is on record that on one occasion he wrote for sixteen hours without sleep or food. At such times he is indifferent to sounds. Even voices in his room cannot interrupt him; piano practice he rather likes! The reaction from such preternatural mental activity is necessarily complete. But, strange as it seems, it lasts but a short time. Mr. Farjeon never takes a holiday in the accepted sense of the word. Even when he goes abroad his typewriting machine goes with him and his copy comes home regularly.

"I must work!" he declares. "I can't do without it. It's impossible to me."

No one can read one of Mr. Farjeon's books, no one can hold any conversation with him, without becoming aware that the whole man is tensely and essentially dramatic. And the question inevitably arises: Why has he never yet written a play? The question has presented itself also to Mr. Farjeon himself, and the answers are numerous, though perhaps not altogether convincing. In the first place—so says Mrs. Farjeon—he no sooner finds himself with an idea for a play than he says, "What a good story this would make!" and proceeds to write the story. In the second place—says Mr. Farjeon—plays have to be fitted to popular actors and actresses, and he cannot answer for the amenability of his characters. He did write a couple of acts once, it appears—an adaptation of an incident in one of his own stories; but at that stage the leading actor called heaven and earth to witness that the leading actress had all the fun, and demanded that her doings and sayings should straightway be transferred to him! In this Mr. Farjeon found himself unable to accommodate him, and the scheme fell through.

All authors have their "little ways." One has a taste for balancing feathers on the end of his nose; another is addicted to leap-frog over the chairs. Mr. Farjeon's solace is a game of "patience." The cards are always at his side as he works, and occasionally he gets up and deliberately plays three different kinds. "If they come out right," he says, "I go back to my work quite happy. If they don't, it bothers me a little. Sometimes I throw the cards down in the middle and go back to my typewriter—obliged to go on, you know." "Patience" is a game which few authors, one would think, are less called upon to play than Mr. Farjeon.

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GIANTS OF THE FOREST.

BY
JAMES
LINDSAY.

Illustrated from Photographs.

A CHAR-A-BANC FULL OF PASSENGERS PASSING THROUGH "WAWONA," WHICH IS TWENTY-SEVEN FEET IN DIAMETER.

Stereoscopic photos by Underwood & Underwood.

THERE are two natural wonders in America which every visitor to that country should make a point of seeing. One is, of course, the famous Niagara Falls, and the other the Yosemite Valley of California. The Falls are visited probably by ninety per cent. of the visitors to the States, owing to their easy accessibility from the two great centres of New York and Chicago; but the Yosemite Valley, which lies in the Sierra Nevada Range of mountains on the western side of the continent, about 150 miles distant from San Francisco, has comparatively few pilgrims to view its solemn grandeur and surpassing beauty. No one who visits this magnificent temple of Nature should omit to make a short detour from the valley into the extensive forests that border it—forests in which may be seen trees that tower 300 feet into the air, and range from twenty to 100 feet in the circumference of their giant trunks.

Even with the aid of such striking photographs as are utilised for the purpose of

A LOG SEVENTEEN FEET THICK.

Photo by A. W. Ericson, Arcata.

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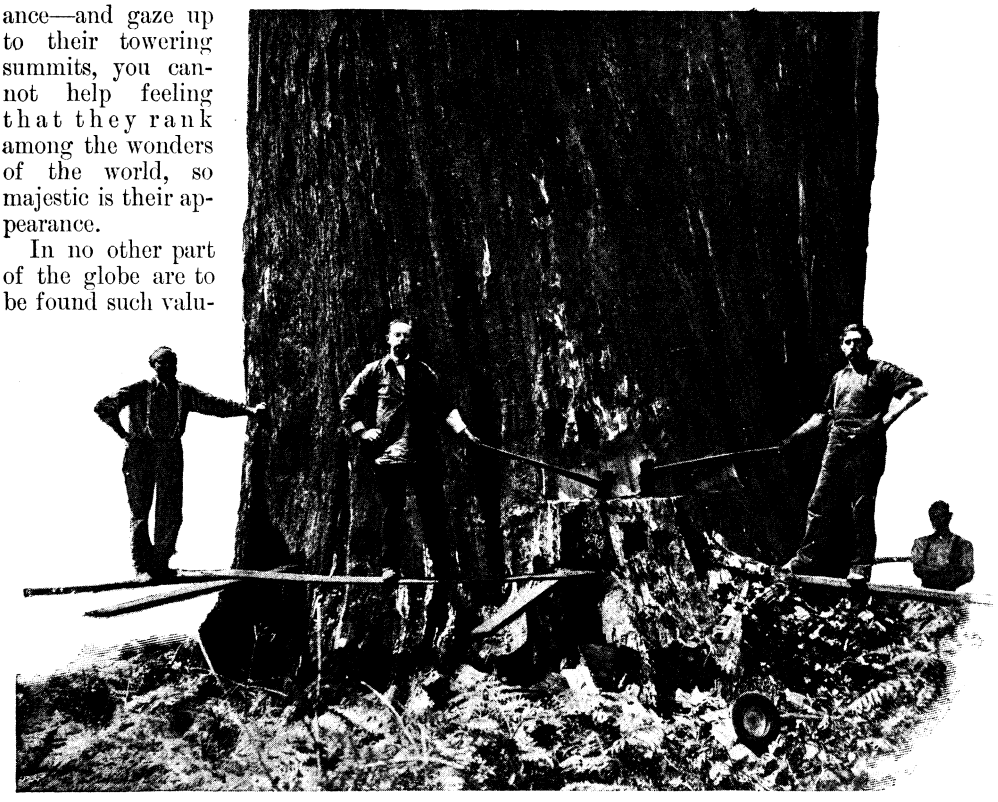
illustrating this article, photographs which, by the way, were specially taken by Mr. A. W. Ericson for the Commissioners of the Chicago Exhibition of 1893, it is impossible to give a true idea of the immensity, height, profusion, and beauty of these giants of the forest. As you stand beneath them, swathed in the dense undergrowth of fern—these trees, with their lofty boughs, inhale the ozone that drifts in from the sea, so that the plants beneath them thrive with wonderful luxuriance—and gaze up to their towering summits, you cannot help feeling that they rank among the wonders of the world, so majestic is their appearance.

In no other part of the globe are to be found such valuable and extensive tracts of timber as in the Humboldt and Mendocino counties of California, which produce the magnificent growths roughly grouped into two classes, one known as *Sequoia Gigantea*, or big trees, and the other as *Sequoia Sempererreus*, or redwood trees, but more generally known as the Mariposa and Calaveras trees respectively. It is calculated by botanical *savants* that in some prehistoric period there were as many as thirty different specimens of this genus; but all are now extinct, with the exception of these two species, and these are not now to be found in any part of the globe outside California. The American Government is fully alive to the value of these trees, and is jealously preserving the *Sequoia Gigantea* species by prohibiting its utilisation for commercial purposes. The Mariposa grove, containing over seven hundred of these trees, has been converted by Congress into a public park; but upon the use of redwood, which is more abundant, no restriction is placed.



TREE MEASURING TWENTY-ONE FEET IN DIAMETER, FELLED WITH AXES BECAUSE NO SAW WAS LONG ENOUGH TO CUT THROUGH IT.

Photo by A. W. Ericson, Arcata.

It was through the enterprise of a travelling showman that these trees were first made known to the world at large. Happening to be passing through the district in the year 1852, this man was impressed with the tremendous girth of one of the trees, and, with a quick eye to business, bethought him that a section of this botanical giant would be a valuable addition to his stock of curiosities, hewed down a large piece of bark, and placed it on exhibition in the towns through which he passed. His expectations did not

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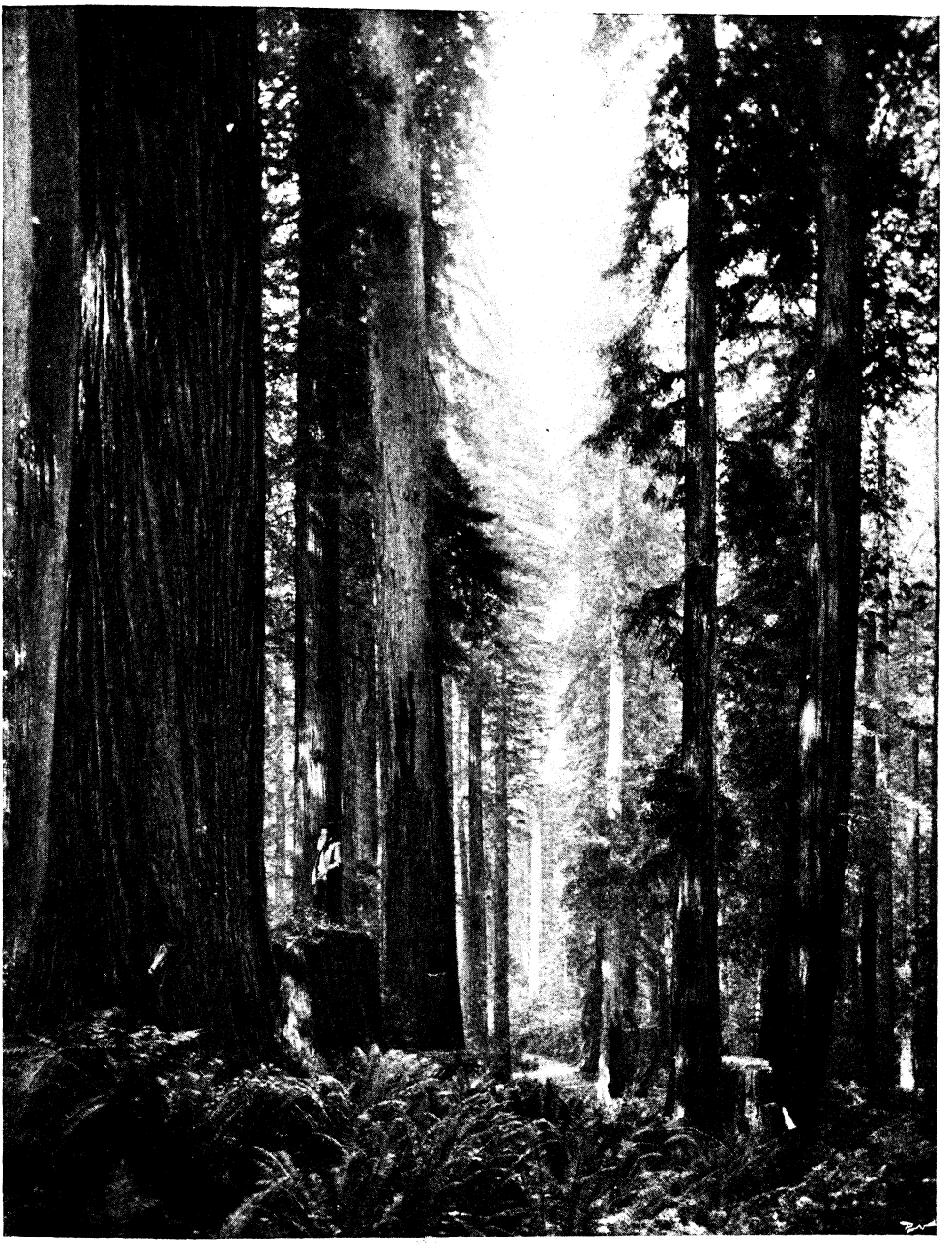

A REDWOOD FOREST IN CALIFORNIA.

Photo by A. W. Ericson, Arcata.

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go unrealised, for this specimen of wonders he had seen in the course of his travels aroused great interest wherever it was seen. Elated with his success, the showman repaired again to the forest, but was mortified to find that his vandal act had killed the tree, Nothing daunted, he decided to cut the tree down, but this was a much more difficult task than he anticipated, and kept five men constantly employed for no less than twenty-two days.

Through the enterprise of this showman the attention of the timber world was attracted to the untapped mines of wealth lying in these forests. In a very short time mills sprang up in all directions for the purpose of felling the trees and converting them into timber, to meet the demands of commerce. What was fifty years ago a secluded Garden of Eden, inhabited only by Indians and the birds and beasts of the forest, now resounds with the whirr of saws, the clang of the axe, the whistle of the steam-engine, and the creaking of the heavily laden timber train. At the present time some fifty thousand acres of land in Humboldt county have been laid bare, and yet there are nearly five hundred thousand acres of redwood still standing, representing in board measure something like 50,000,000,000 feet of timber. The present annual rate of exportation of this redwood from California is estimated at about 200,000,000 feet. There is, therefore, still sufficient timber in Humboldt county alone to meet the world's demands for another two centuries and a half.

TRUNK MEASURING TWENTY FEET IN DIAMETER.

Photo by A. W. Ericson, Arcata.

The redwood is so-called from its peculiar reddish-brown colour, which is so deep in tint that when polished the wood might almost be taken for mahogany. In point of toughness and durability it is a serious rival to oak. It is peculiarly difficult to ignite, and even when dry it burns but slowly, resisting the flames with remarkable endurance. It is probably owing to this characteristic that the Sequoia forests have not been visited by fire, that plague which has laid waste so many valuable tracts of timber in other parts of the world.

When the mills were first established in these forests, and the work of destruction began, the tremendous girth of the trees necessitated new mechanical contrivances, for those already in use proved by no means adequate. The felling of such mammoth timber is necessarily a very big task. A platform is erected around the base of the tree, the supporting rafters of which, instead of being buried vertically in the earth, are driven horizontally into the trunk of the tree itself a few feet above the ground. The men take up their position upon this platform, and make an undercut in the tree with their axes so that the saw may be inserted. Slowly but surely the relentless iron teeth grind their way through the trunk of the tree, until the giant bows to the ingenuity of man, staggers a little in a last effort of resistance, and then heels over and falls prone upon the ground above which it has so long towered in the pride of its strength. In some instances, as was the case with the tree measuring twenty-one feet in diameter, of which we give an illustration, no saw of sufficient length could then be found, and the whole operation of felling had to be accomplished with axes.

After being laid low the tree is stripped of its branches—in many cases the largest of these measures as much as four feet in

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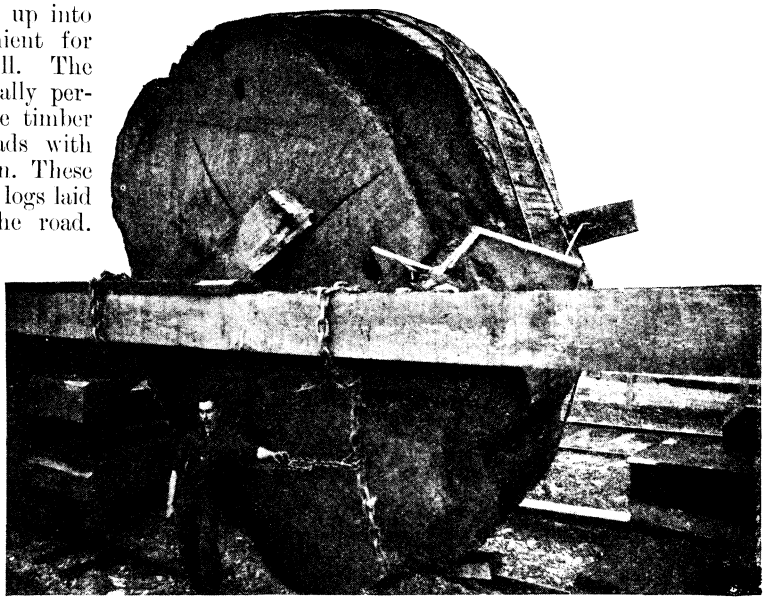
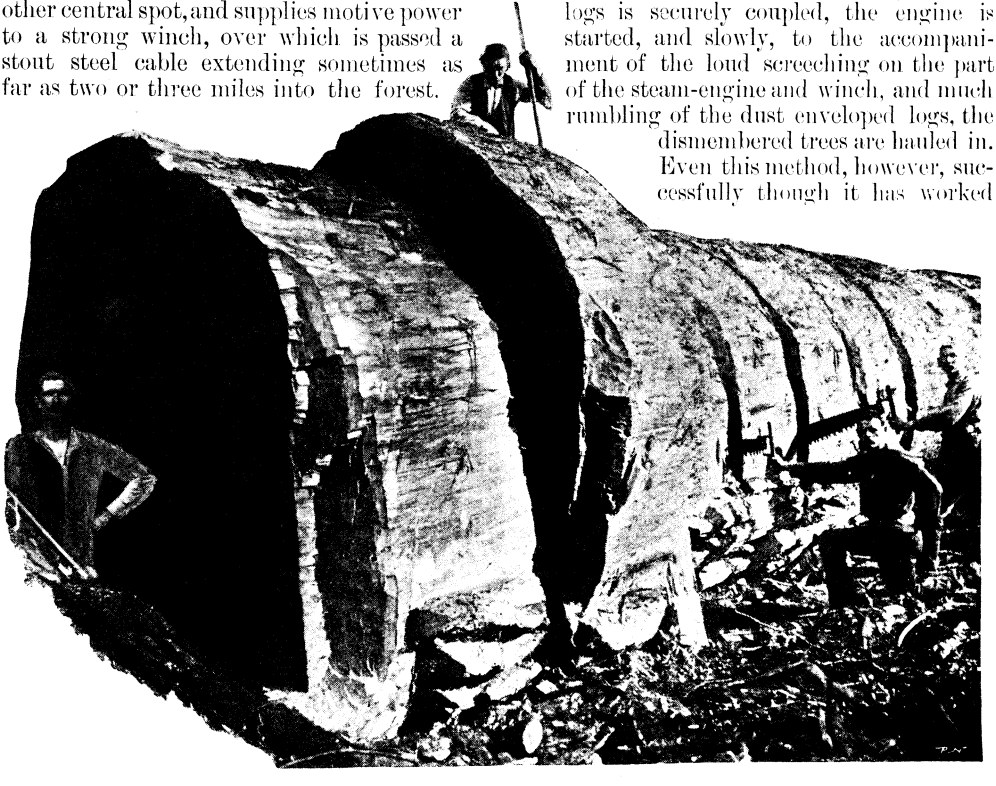
diameter—and sawn up into logs of size convenient for transport to the mill. The transport was originally performed by hauling the timber along over skid roads with teams of horses or oxen. These skid roads consist of logs laid transversely across the road. Down the centre of this wooden pathway a groove is made, which is kept well greased or wet so that the logs slide along easily and smoothly.



MR. WILLIAM ASTOR'S DINING-TABLE ON ITS WAY TO THE COAST.
Photo by A. W. Ericson, Arcata.

This is naturally a very tedious and expensive method of conveyance, and has now to a very large extent been superseded by the cable-logging engine. The steam-engine is stationed near the mill or some other central spot, and supplies motive power to a strong winch, over which is passed a stout steel cable extending sometimes as far as two or three miles into the forest. To the end of this cable a long train of logs is securely coupled, the engine is started, and slowly, to the accompaniment of the loud screeching on the part of the steam-engine and winch, and much rumbling of the dust enveloped logs, the dismembered trees are hauled in. Even this method, however, successfully though it has worked



TREE CALCULATED FROM ITS RINGS TO BE NINE HUNDRED YEARS OLD.
Photo by A. W. Ericson, Arcata.

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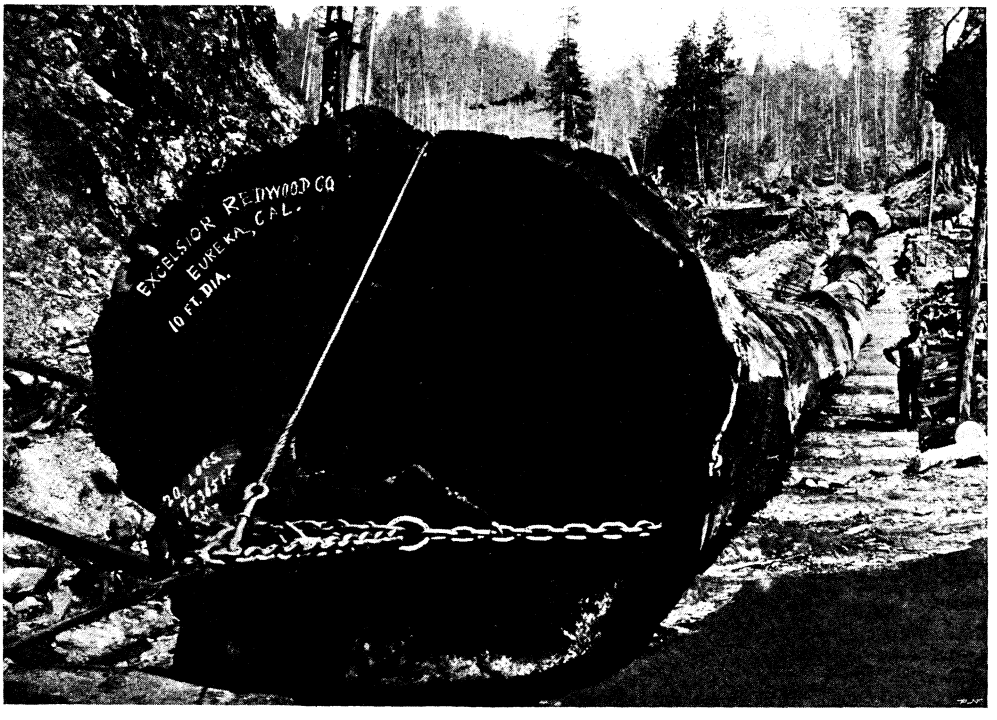
in the past, is giving way to the more civilised railway, which now dissects the forests in all directions. The logs are transferred to the trucks practically direct from the spot where they originally fell, and can then be speedily conveyed to the mills, or direct to the sea coast for shipping, or to any other destination. In the illustration we give there are twenty-four trucks loaded with logs, the sizes of which, as may be seen by comparison with the figures of the men, vary from six to eleven feet in diameter, and represent a total board measure of 364,424 feet. Occasionally the logs are found too large to be placed on the trucks. In such cases they are split longitudinally into smaller pieces by means of blasting powder.



A TRAIN OF LOGS HAULED THROUGH THE FOREST BY A STEEL CABLE ATTACHED TO A STATIONARY STEAM-ENGINE.

Photo by A. W. Ericson, Arcata.

On arrival at the mill the logs are, as a rule, consigned into surrounding lakes and pools of water until required to make their reappearance at the factory to be sawn up. The railway terminates at the summit of a ridge, down the other side of which is a precipitous chute extending into the water, and paved in the same fashion as the skid roads in the forest. The cars, as they arrive at the end of the railroad, are each relieved of the logs, which by their own weight are borne violently down the chute. A loud roar proclaims the rude descent, and the heavy mass falls into the water at the bottom with a sharp report, and throws a cloud of spray hundreds of feet into the air. In a second or two it reappears on the surface, still continuing its wild career until brought to a sudden standstill by collision with another log or with the further bank of the reservoir.

Some of the trees which are greatest in girth are not now the tallest of the forest. At a time when doubtless they towered above those around them, they were either struck by lightning or snapped in two by the force of some one or other of those resistless tornadoes which sweep with such terrific force across the great American continent. Nevertheless, in most instances they are still alive and continue to throw out new wood and foliage from what were originally their lower branches. Thus, when you come to close quarters, you realise with some disappointment that their height is not now in proportion to their girth.

This present disproportion is particularly noticeable in the case of the tree through

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LOGS HAULED BY HORSES.
Photo by A. W. Ericson, Arcata.

which a roadway has been cut, as shown in our first illustration. In its prime this must have been a truly marvellous and magnificent specimen of the Sequoia, for an arch has been hollowed out of its trunk sufficiently wide and high to admit of a large *char-à-banc* conveying sixteen passengers, and drawn by six horses, being driven through. The size of this monster can be to some extent appreciated from this astounding fact, while it must be remembered that the tree is still alive, to secure which from twelve to eighteen inches of the trunk of the tree has had to be left to carry the sap on each side of the archway. A few years ago a traveller brought back a slice of the bark of this tree. The strip was calculated to be about one-third of the thickness of the bark. It measured between four and five inches, so that, estimated from this fact, the bark of this Sequoia is more than a foot thick.

Our illustrations also include a photograph of the section of one of these giants of the forest which has been converted into a table for Mr. Astor, the well-known American millionaire, and is said to be large enough to accommodate a company of twenty-seven around its edge. Beneath the light that beats upon the dinner-table of a millionaire scarcely less fiercely than it illuminates a monarch's throne, the facts circulated concerning the history of this table appear to have been somewhat distorted; but as an article of household furniture it is, in any case, sufficiently remarkable.

Many of the largest of the Californian trees have received distinguishing titles, and are pointed out to visitors with particular interest, such as "Uncle Tom's Cabin," so called from the fact that the trunk is hollow, and the cavity is of the size of a small room.

THE MODERN RAILWAY SYSTEM
Photo by A. W. Ericson, Arcata.

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In the Good Old Times.

From the Picture by Wal Paget.

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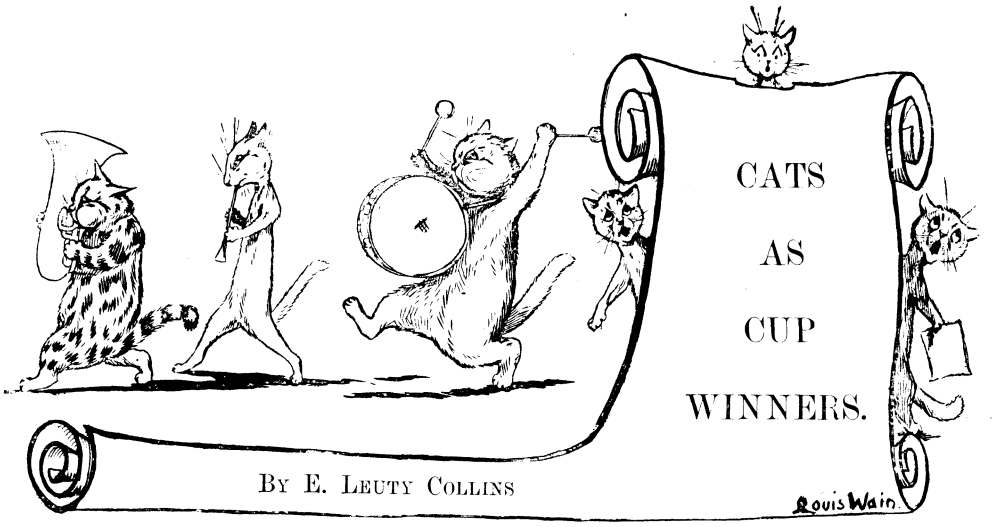
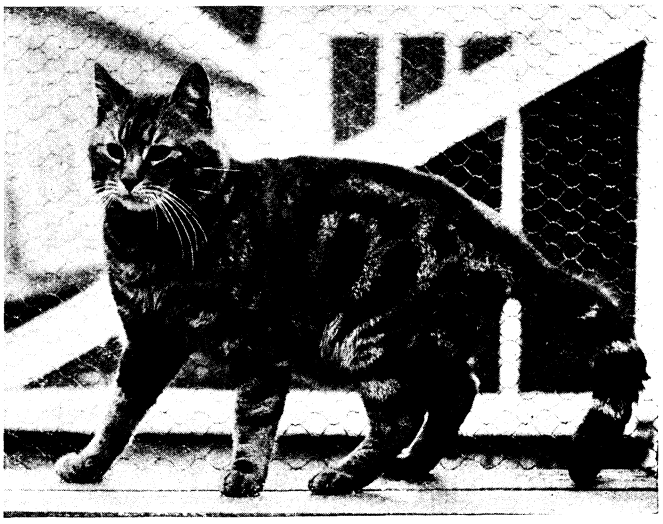


By E. Leuty Collins

IT was less than twenty years ago that the feline tribe was looked upon as simply a necessary household appendage and allowed its domicile only in the kitchen. But the National Cat Club, whose admirable show takes place yearly at the Crystal Palace, has proved that a great deal of interest is nowadays taken in the cat world—so much so, indeed, that it would almost seem that the study of the cat is becoming an absolute cult in itself, and that the animal's nineteenth century descent from the Egyptian idol is not in vain.

The old time association of the allegorical "old maid" with her cat has died a natural death; it is now neither old nor young maids, but intelligent men and women, who see the attributes of quality and beauty in the cat, and who unblushingly admit the fact.

It is well known that the late Canon Liddon was an immense lover of cats, and would have his favourites with him during his most secluded moments. He considered them most sagacious animals, an opinion which I have had every reason to endorse, since I have found considerably more pride in the cat than in the dog, taking them distinctly and on a different animal basis. The show of celebrated pussies at the Crystal Palace last year excelled that of the Royal Botanical Garden Show, and overcapped in entries the previous year's show in both foreign and unique English varieties. It is impossible for me to do justice to the many splendid exhibits in a single article. However, my selection covers some few of the most celebrated winners—cats who are yearly becoming more famous in a by no means circumscribed pet world.



"XENOPHON": CHAMPION ENGLISH BROWN TABBY.
Winner of eight championships, twenty firsts, and numerous specials and cups. Owned by Mr. Sam Woodiwiss.
Photo by T. Fall.

A man now pre-eminent in the study of cat life as a hobby is Mr. Sam Woodiwiss, of Finchley, whose remarkably victorious "Xenophon"

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"JIMMY": CHAMPION SILVER TABBY.
Owned by Mrs. Herring.
Photo by V. E. Vandycke.

holds still the champion sway. Not only is Mr. Woodiwiss devoted to cats, but he is also an enthusiast on the subject of dogs.

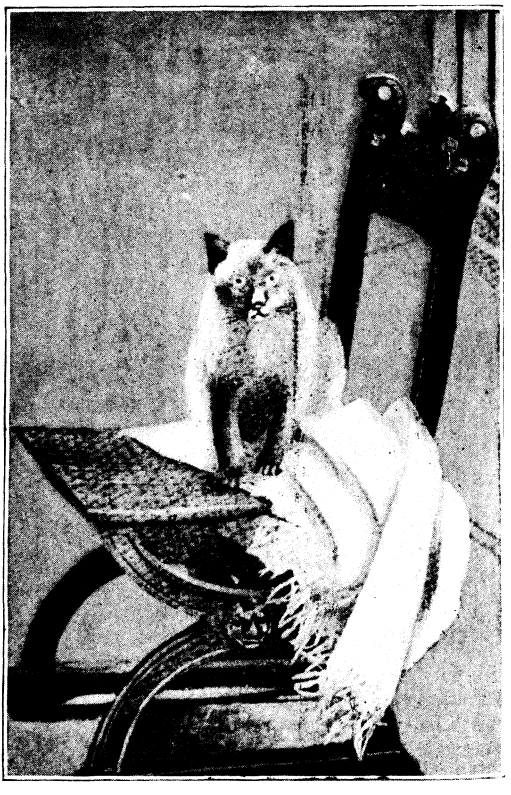
"Xenophon" was prized at £2,000, and has won his master every possible honour a cat can—eight championships, over twenty first prizes, besides cups, specials, etc., etc. He is a most homely cat, of immense size, and with exceptionally fine sable markings. His pet name is "The Man."

The Hon. Mrs. McLaren Morrison is one of our most ardent lady cat fanciers. She is always to be seen, with her Indian attendant, at the shows, taking an active interest in everything. She has exhibited some of the choicest foreign long and short-haired specimens at the Crystal Palace. She has a splendid collection of Siamese. "Suza" is one of the handsomest, and is a great winner. Much care is bestowed upon them, as these cats are extremely difficult to rear in this country. Mrs. McLaren Morrison's white long-haired Persians are hard to beat. One of the most popular of these is "Ameer," a beautiful creature with a fine snow-white coat and a pair of turquoise-blue eyes. "Ameer" has had many conquests, and deserves them fully. "Kepwick Lily" and "Kepwick True Blue" are other belles of pure white. Mrs. Morrison has a number of other specimens on show, and is one of the popular vice-presidents of the National Cat Club.

Speaking of unique Siamese cats, I must mention the Duchess of Bedford's beautiful "Goblin." Although Her Grace is not an orthodox "shower," she is president of the National Cat Club, and possesses some very delightful pets of the cat tribe. "Goblin" is a Siamese of rare merit. Our reproduction is from a block kindly lent us by Mrs. Stennard Robinson, the energetic honorary secretary of the National Cat Club.

The Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava is also an enthusiastic cat lover, and possesses a valuable specimen, "Zolfa," but as this pet has not been photographed I cannot give him the prominence he deserves here among his peers.

"Champion Jimmy," the property of Mrs. Herring, the veteran pioneer of lady cat fanciers, always holds his own. He revels now under the titles of "Champion" and "Premier," and has gained for his mistress over fifty first and special prizes, with silver cups and medals. He is a magnificent English silver tabby, with perfect markings, and, having captured so many coveted honours, considers himself beyond the average professional. Of course Mrs. Herring exhibits her other famous beauties, both Persian and other foreign scions of the cat tribe; and I was much amused lately to see them all gambolling over the lawn at "Lestock," in company with six or seven beautiful King Charles spaniels.



"GOBLIN": SIAMESE CAT.
Winner of many prizes. Owned by the Duchess of Bedford, President of the National Cat Club.

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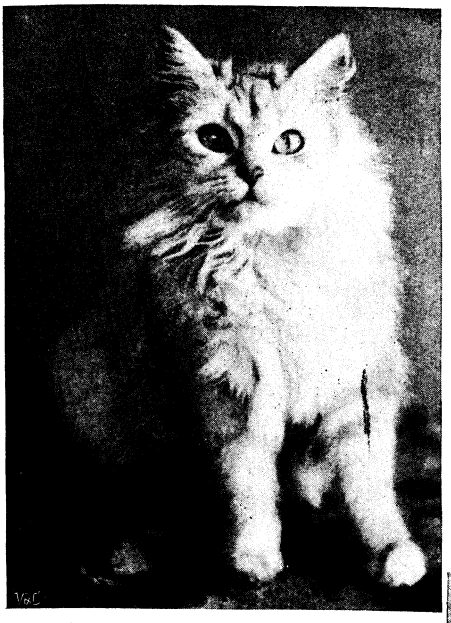


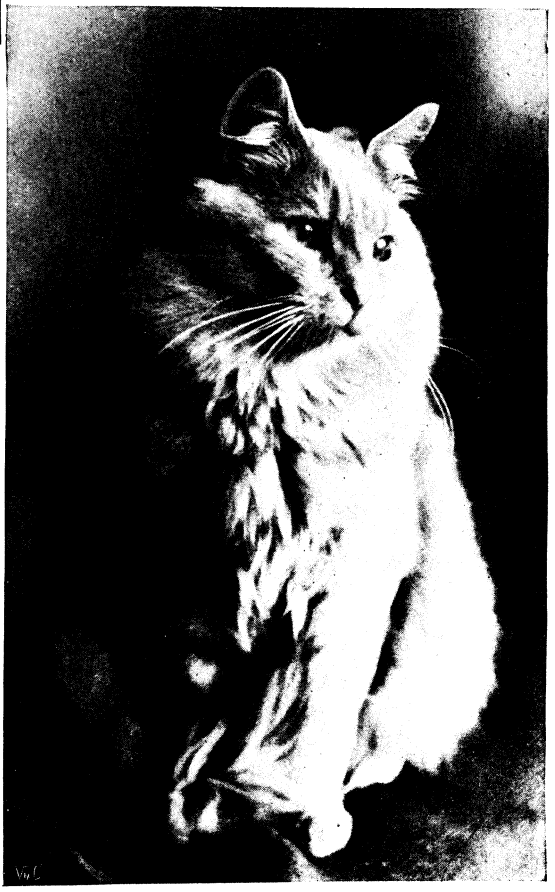
"ZAIDA": CHAMPION CHINCHILLA.
Winner of the Challenge Cup, and of many specials. Owned by Miss Gertrude Willoughby. Photo by E. Landor.

One of the prettiest and most compact Persian chinchillas I have ever seen is Miss Gertrude Willoughby's champion "Zaida." She is a very young cat, with a perfect form and a lovely coat. The "Challenge Cup" fell to her last year, and this year all the honours of her class, with specials, medals, etc. Miss Gertrude Willoughby is one of the shining lights of the N.C.C., and had the honour of conducting H.R.H. the Princess of Wales, with Princess Victoria and *suite*, round the Cat Tent at the last Botanic Show, and presenting Her Royal Highness with a charming bouquet on behalf of the "National Cat Club."

"Fulmer Patty," another of Miss Willoughby's best prize queens, is a pretty, silver-haired creature, lovely in colour and markings, and is much admired. Most of Miss Willoughby's distinguished pets are named "Fulmer," it being at "Fulmer Hall," near Slough, that their charming and kindly mistress domiciles her many costly pets in the most comfortable and well-conducted catteries imaginable. Miss Willoughby tells me that she disposes of many of her lovely kittens for charities, and she has also compiled a very serviceable card on the treatment of foreign kittens and their ailments. The proceeds of the latter she also devotes to charitable objects.

I must make special reference to another cat which we have not space to reproduce here, and that is Miss Willoughby's Siamese "Fulmer Banjo," a lively, pug-like specimen, with a splendid fawn coat and tanned feet and ears. The Hon. Mrs. McLaren Morrison and Miss Willoughby both have a special liking for the Siamese breed, and exhibit really most beautiful specimens of this curious and rare feline friend, although these animals are very difficult to rear and cultivate in our precarious climate.

Cream is one of the latest fashions in cats, and Miss Winifred Beal's lovely twin pair, "Ronaldkirk Midshipmite" and "Ronaldkirk Admiral," are the favourites. Last year this pair took everything before them in their variety, and so they were christened "The Heavenly Twins"—



"MIDSHIPMITE": CHAMPION CREAM.
Owned by Miss Winifred Beale. Photo by E. Yeoman.

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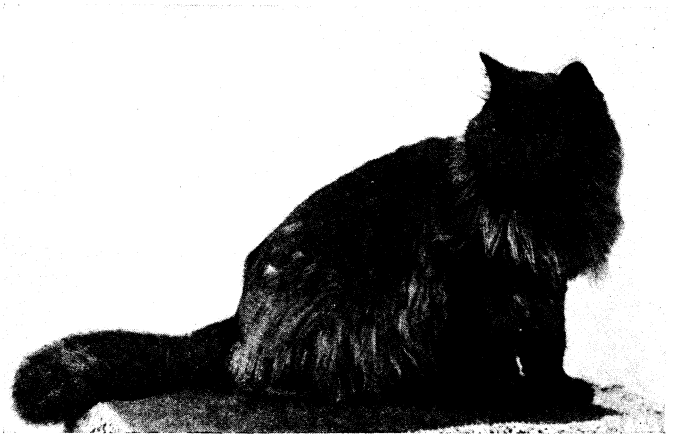
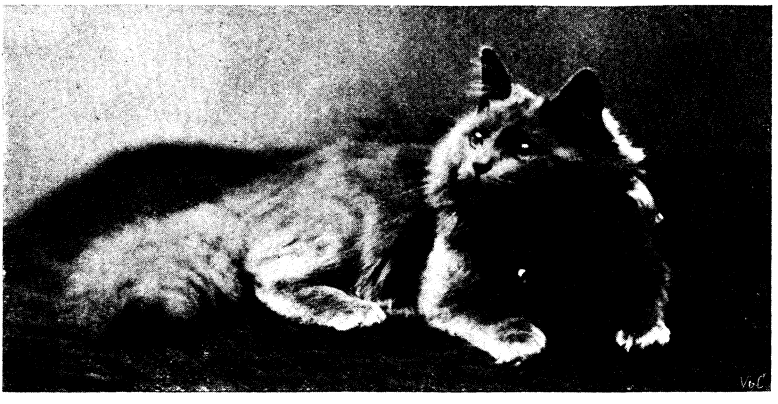


"ALBION JOEY": CHAMPION BLUE PERSIAN.
Winner of four firsts, three specials, and two silver medals. Owned by Miss Knight.

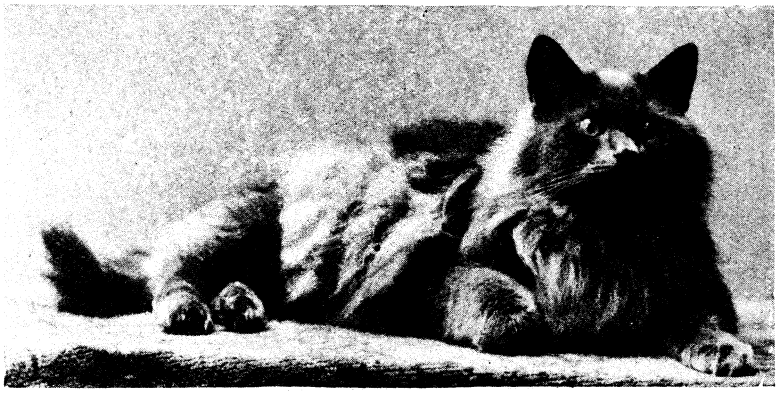
coat. Miss Beal's pussies take their name from Ronaldkirk Rectory, her home near Darlington, where these fortunate animals have a happy time of it when not on show.

Another very favourite colour with connoisseurs is the "blue" cat. Madame Portier's "Blue Boy" is a magnificent creature. He won at the Botanic Show the McLaren Morrison Indian Bowl, and owns many first and special prizes. His coat and his size are remarkable, to say nothing of colour and shape. This cat was specially singled out by her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, who had him taken out of the pen for a Royal complimentary pat.

with apologies to Madame Sarah Grand—and the sobriquet clings to them still. "Admiral," however, detests notoriety, and cannot be persuaded to face the most friendly camera, but I give his brother "Midshipmite," who is precisely like him, without being a martyr to such sensitiveness. He is a beautiful Persian, with a long, exquisitely creamy



"TIBBEBOO": CHAMPION BLUE PERSIAN.
Aged one year. Owned by Mrs. Clunes.
Photo by Taber.



"BLUE BOY": BLUE PERSIAN.
Champion, 1897; winner of special, 1898. Owned by Madame Portier.
Photo by Curtis.

Less than two years ago, when "Blue Boy" was a kitten, he was sold for the modest sum of four guineas. His purchaser, however, relinquished her bargain, and now Madame Portier would take no price for her pet.

Another "blue" of celebrity, running "Blue Boy" very close, and

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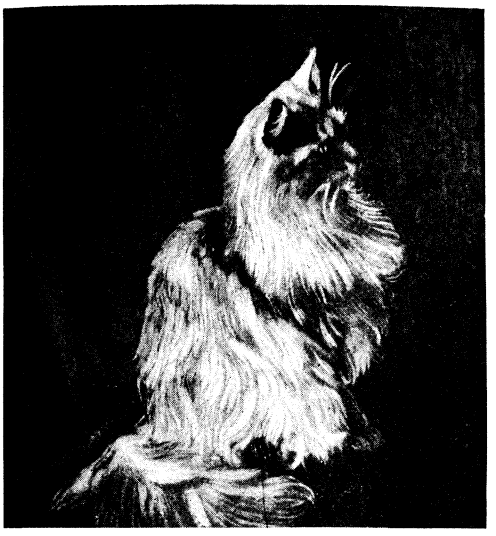


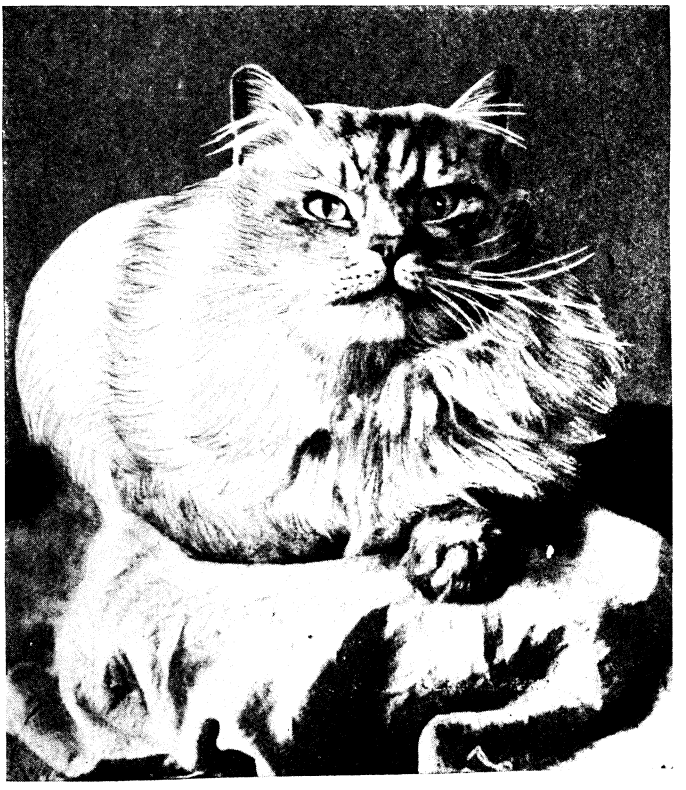
"LADY VERE DE VERE."
Winner of many prizes. Owned by Mrs. Champion.

sometimes in advance of him, is Miss Knight's "Albion Joey." He is a grand animal, with a coat of tremendous length and a frill fringed softly with silver. He is winner of many firsts and specials, and was immensely admired at the show, taking the championship of 1898.

Some particularly beautiful specimens of the blue species are those owned by Mrs. Finnie Young, of Baillieston, N.B. They are known as "Blue Jackets I., II. and III.," and are sons of the celebrated champion, "Blue Ruin." They are all equally fine cats. "Blue Jacket I." has already carried off thirteen first prizes, specials, etc., and his progeny are equally successful as winners. Mrs. Finnie Young is devoted to her pets, and at the last show at the Crystal Palace she told me that the price she put on her cats—£100 each—was by no means a large one, as she esteems the honours taken by the trio even more highly than their pecuniary value.

A little sensation was caused at the summer show over another blue pet in the shape of Mrs. Clunes's "Tibbeboo," who, although but ten months old, captured the championship and specials awarded to its class by Mr. Louis Wain. For short face and compactness of form as well as in colour it quite fulfilled Mr. Wain's chief demands. And this beautiful cat easily secured the highest favour at the late show. Mr. Vernon Stokes made a special sketch of her.

One of the most lovely chinchilla greys is "Lord Argent," who is a noted prizewinner and the sire of many aristocratic sons and daughters who are both medallists and first prize winners. "Lady Vere de Vere," a dainty beauty, is one of them. His lordship won the first, second, silver medal, and special at the Brighton N.C.C. Show, and is a recognised force in the feline world. Mrs. Champion, of Chiswick, makes a speciality of the grey and white breed. Her exquisite snow-white "White Friar," took everything before it at the Palace Show. He possesses the most celestial blue eyes possible.



"LORD ARGENT."
Silver medallist. Owned by Mrs. Champion.
Photo by Landor.

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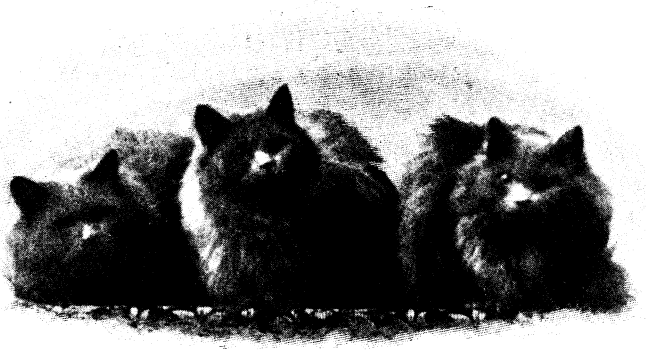
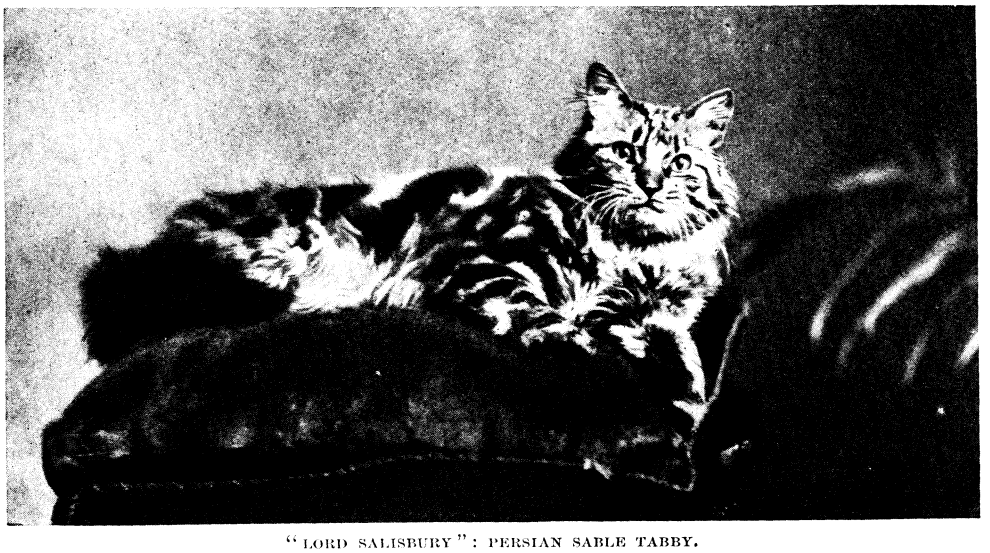
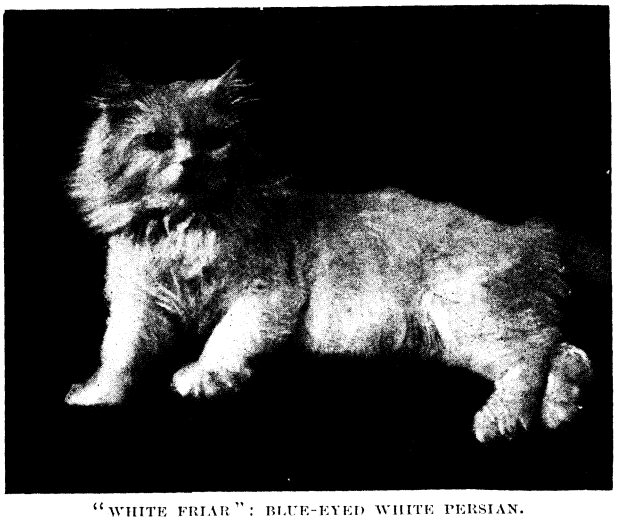
A very remarkable cat, in contrast, for rich sable and black marking, is "Lord Salisbury," owned by Mrs. Bonar, and one of Mrs. Herring's celebrated stock. "Salisbury" came second as a kitten in 1897 at the N.C.C. Show, and now, at sixteen months, has scored first and special for best cat in the show at Rochester, and two prizes at the Crystal Palace.



"CHAMPION BLUE JACKET," "BLUE JACKET II.," "BLUE JACKET III."
Winning team of Blue Persians. Owned by Mrs. A. Finnie Young. Photo by Simpson.



"LORD SALISBURY": PERSIAN SABLE TABBY.
Winner of the Herring special and first prizes. Owned by Mrs. Bonar. Photo by A. Flint.



"WHITE FRIAR": BLUE-EYED WHITE PERSIAN.
Winner of twelve prizes, Crystal Palace, 1898, including N.C.C. Championship. Owned by Mrs. Champion.

Altogether the National Cat Club and its devotees, with their love and zeal for the feline cause, have given an impetus to a large and growing work which enhances the value as well as the proper treatment and culture of a popular domestic pet; and all true lovers of the cause of animals collectively must appreciate the work which so many ladies of position, with Mrs. Stennard Robinson, their honorary secretary and treasurer, are banded in one to establish and keep on a thoroughly satisfactory footing. If it be true that "every dog has his day," it is only fair that his natural enemy, the cat, should have as pleasant a life as possible.

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AH LUN'S GIFT.

By W. Pett Ridge.

Illustrated by Will Owen.

"I DON'T reckon," said the boy who was dusting a cigarette advertisement, "that we've got what you may call an exciting business, sir."

Mr. Bourne, behind the counter, looked up from the romance that he was reading and fingered his slight moustache nervously.

"Two packets of cigarette papers," went on the boy gloomily, "a screw of shag, and a couple of cheeky kids trying to sell us matches—that's what we've done to-day. And my argument—— (Now then, Tottie." This to an amazing young woman on a tobacco advertisement that had gone awry. "Sit up straight, can't you, when I keep telling you)——And my argument is that we might do a lump better."

"If I'd only got a bit more capital," said the young proprietor wistfully to the boy.

"Kepital?" echoed the boy. "Kepital ain't everything. What you want, sir, is push; what you want is enterprise; what you want is to fling yourself about."

"Another fifty pound," said Mr. Bourne thoughtfully, "and I could 'ave got into a main thoroughfare, where a demand for a good sound twopenny goes on the whole day long."

"People ain't coming down this by-street to get no twopennies," agreed Robert Henry, "sound or unsound." He took a broom and swept the spotless floor with something of fury. "Nobody never comes 'ere; nothing never 'appens; no one never——Ullo!"

Robert Henry ran to the doorway. From the direction of Limehouse Causeway there was a sound of voices. The noise came nearer.

"What's up?" asked Mr. Bourne. He went round to the door leisurely.

"Shindy of some kind," shouted Robert Henry with excitement. "One of them sailor's rows, I expect. Time we had anofer murder. 'Ere comes someone!"

Someone had indeed turned the corner of the dim, narrow street. Mr. Bourne, peeping over the head of Robert Henry, saw a Chinaman slipping eel-like in the shadow of the houses. As he neared the shop, a noisy crowd appeared at the end of the street, cheering two short infuriated Japanese sailors. The pursued Chinaman looked over his shoulder and, turning swiftly, slipped between Mr. Bourne and the lad into the tobacconist's shop. He jumped nimbly on

"'Ere comes someone!'"

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the counter, turned out the four gas jets, and disappeared. The crowd swept past the doorway and then wavered, and some of it returned.

"Seen a Chin?" demanded a swollen-faced man, in a gasp. "There's one come down this way. These two Japs are after him, and they'll 'ave his bleed if they can find him."

"He went on that way," said Robert Henry readily. "Frough that court."

"Sure he didn't turn into your shop?"

The two Japanese sailors came back breathless, their *entourage* of interested men and women with them.

"Fink we shouldn't know it if he had?" asked Robert Henry indignantly. "Ast the guv'nor, if you don't believe *me*."

The swollen-faced man looked interrogatively at Mr. Bourne, and the two Japanese pressed forward to hear his answer. From inside the dark shop came the sound of partially repressed breathing.

"What the boy says," declared Mr. Bourne, "is gospel."

"Come on!" shouted the swollen-faced man, with the ardour of a true sportsman. "He's gone up this court. We'll ketch him there like a bloomin' rat in a bloomin' 'ole."

The two Japanese sailors rushed on, and the crowd followed, enjoying to the full the pleasures of the chase and screaming with enthusiasm. A constable of the K division stamped down the narrow street and spoke to Mr. Bourne.

"What's up?" asked K 052.

"'Unting a Chinaman," said Mr. Bourne.

"I wish all the foreigners," said K 052 strenuously, "was put in a balloon and carried away to sea and drowned."

"Wouldn't be a bad idea," agreed Mr. Bourne.

"Oblige me with 'alf an ounce of best navy cut before you go to by-bye."

"With pleasure," said Mr. Bourne.

Robert Henry went round to the other side of the counter, and the constable at the doorway found his pouch. Robert Henry stumbled against the escaped Chinaman, who, crouching down, kissed Robert Henry's coat-sleeve. The lad made the tobacco into a packet and brought it to the doorway.

"Fall over yourself?" asked the constable kindly.

"Very nigh," replied Robert Henry.

"Never mind about the twopence ha'penny," said Mr. Bourne.

"Very well," remarked K 052 agreeably, "I won't. So long!"

"So long!" said Mr. Bourne. "Robert 'Enry, put the shutters up."

Mr. Bourne did not move from the doorway until this undertaking was completed, being, as a matter of fact, a young man with only the usual amount of courage, and not, under the circumstances, disinclined for the presence and support of Robert Henry. When the last shutter was fixed the two went inside and closed the door.

"Strike a match," suggested Robert Henry.

The wax vesta illumined the shop and showed a blue linen cap beyond the counter.

"It's all right, old chap," said Robert Henry. "Come out."

The blue linen cap rose slowly, and a face with high cheek bones, over which the yellow skin was tightly stretched, peeped over the counter.

"All gol away?" asked the Chinaman, in an awed whisper.

"Clean away," replied Mr. Bourne.

The Chinaman raised himself tremblingly to his full height and stood blinking on the inside of the counter. His long, skinny hands, with tapering nails, trembled as he laid them on the glass case which contained packets of cigarettes. His long pigtail slipped from underneath his cap. He looked at the proprietor and at the boy, and then, deciding apparently that Mr. Bourne was the more important of the two, back to the proprietor again.

"You save," he said laboriously, in his loose-tongued way, "Ah Lun. You save his life. Ah Lun mluch oblige."

"You'd 'a' been a deader by this time," said Robert Henry, "if we hadn't given you a 'and. You wouldn't never 'ave eaten no more bird's nests if we hadn't let you slip in 'ere."

"I play you," said Ah Lun, still addressing Mr. Bourne. "I play you."

"Never touch cards," said the proprietor.

"I say I play you for what you do."

"He means he'll pay you," interpreted Robert Henry.

"How much?" asked Mr. Bourne. He lighted a second jet of gas.

"Got no moley," said Ah Lun regretfully.

"Ah!" said Mr. Bourne, turning out the second jet of gas. "That's a drawback."

"What was the row about?" asked Robert Henry.

"I sell him," said the Chinaman, with a grin that flickered over his bony face and disappeared, "I sell him lilee diamond. He no likee."

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"Rum chap, not to like diamonds," said the boy. "But, 'arking back, how do you reckon you're going to recompense me and the guv'nor for saving your life if you ain't got no money?"

The question was a long one and had to be repeated in an abbreviated form. Ah Lun came softly from behind the counter and went to look through the round hole in the shutters of the shop door. He started back suddenly.

"Lil Chilaman go there!" he begged, shivering with fear. He pointed to the rear of the shop.

"Look 'ere," said Mr. Bourne definitely —"I've had about enough of your nonsense! I've got no particular choice between Japan and China or any other country. Robert 'Enry, open the door and out this chap!"

"*You'd* better out him," said Robert Henry; "*I'll* open the door!"

"No, no, no!" entreated Ah Lun on his knees. "Outside they killa Chilaman! No, no, no!"

"Get out!" commanded Mr. Bourne. "You shouldn't come over to a respectable country like this. Move yourself!"

Ah Lun clutched at Mr. Bourne's coat and pulled him down. Then he took something from a pocket inside his blue blouse—a small black bottle with a golden stopper—and whispered with feverish eagerness to Mr. Bourne. The tobacconist's face took an air of incredulity.

"Who are you kiddin' of?" he demanded.

Ah Lun whispered again with increased excitement. Mr. Bourne took the small black bottle reluctantly.

"Shut the door, Robert 'Enry!"

"Make up your mind what you're going to do!" grumbled the boy. "First it's open the door, then it's shut the door, and——"

"Shut your mouth, too," ordered the tobacconist, "and stop 'ere till I come back." He turned to the trembling Chinaman.

"Come on, sir," he said; "this way. There's a step just at the back there. Mind how you fall!"

Mr. Bourne was back in the shop in less than a minute, humming an air with the manner of cheerful unconcern. He opened his private drawer behind the counter and placed something in it, and relocked the drawer with great particularity, trying it several times to see that it was secure. He stepped up on the stool to turn down the one lighted gas jet.

"Have a cigarette to smoke on your way 'ome, Robert 'Enry?"

"No," said the boy shortly.

"A glittering diamond of identical shape."

"Don't let me keep you," said his master, "if you're in a 'urry."

"Me time's me own!" said the boy. "What was that he give you?"

"Don't be late in the morning, mind," said the tobacconist cheerfully. "Always be reg'lar in coming to work, and you're bound to get on in life. And, by the by, that letter for Miss Vennick——"

"What of it?"

"You needn't trouble to leave it now," said Mr. Bourne. "Give it 'ere and I'll destroy it."

He took the letter and tore it into several pieces, and went to the room at the back of the shop.

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"Good night, Robert 'Enry!"

"Goo' night!" said the boy gloomily.

The shop-door slammed with vehemence, and Mr. Bourne peeped through the windowed door to see that the boy had left. Then he pushed the door, and coming back into the shop, unlocked his private drawer carefully, took out the black bottle, and returned to the back room. Ah Lun had gone. He took a small piece of coal from the unlighted fire and placed it on the scarlet-clothed table.

"Expect it's all a common swindle," he said thoughtfully. "You can never trust these foreigners; they'll 'umbug you as soon as look at you."

He took a plate, and on this placed the

"'Robert Henry Wall, Esq.'"

small lump of coal; then, withdrawing very carefully the golden stopper from the black bottle, he poured some of the yellowish liquid over the piece of coal, letting it trickle and permeate. When the piece of coal had been covered, he replaced the golden stopper in the bottle, and looked at the busy, loud-ticking, little American clock on the mantelpiece.

"Two minutes to the hour," he said. "When it strikes——"

Mr. Bourne went to the cupboard and took down a knife and fork and bread and other things with a forced unconcern, as though his nerves were in the calmest condition; but the articles jingled as he held them, and one or two slipped from his unsteady hands. The busy little clock gave a sneeze, and then, in a hurried, bustling way, struck the hour. Mr. Bourne turned to look at the plate at the end of the table. On it lay, not the piece of coal, but a glittering diamond of identical shape, scintillating and sparkling to such an extent as to make his eyes water. He looked around the room in a dazed, bewildered manner. At the windowed part of the door leading into the shop was the astonished face of Robert Henry. Somehow he felt relieved to see the boy.

"Thought—thought you'd gone 'ome," he said, wiping his forehead.

"Thought wrong, then," replied the boy, coming into the room. "What's the little game?"

"Blessed if I know," said the tobacconist weakly. "See what's on that plate. Looks like a diamond, don't it?"

Robert Henry took it up and examined it with the air of one for whom precious gems have no secrets.

"It *is* a diamond," he said affirmatively. He held it up so that the light danced upon it. "Worf," added the boy after some consideration, "worf a fousand pounds, if it's worf a penny."

"Think so?" stammered Mr. Bourne.

"I don't fink," said the boy, "I *know*."

"Then," said Mr. Bourne, with an effort at gaiety, "my fortune's made for life."

"*Your* fortune," said Robert Henry. "What are you gassin' about? *Our* fortune, you mean."

"I mean *our* fortune," admitted Mr. Bourne. "I'm so flurried, I don't know what I'm saying."

"What you want in circs like this," said Robert Henry importantly, "is a cool head. That's where I come in."

"We must make the most of our good fortune," suggested the tobacconist deferentially.

"First thing for you to do," said the managing director, "is to clear out of this 'ole, and break off your engagement with that Vennick gel." It was significant of Robert Henry's new position that he should refer thus lightly to Mr. Bourne's *fiancée*. "What you want is to be unfettered, un'ampered, and free."

"She's a nice, pleasant young lady," said Mr. Bourne vaguely, "but I s'pose she'd never do for the wife of a man of fortune. That idea occurred to me first thing. All the same, I don't see how I'm going to get out of——"

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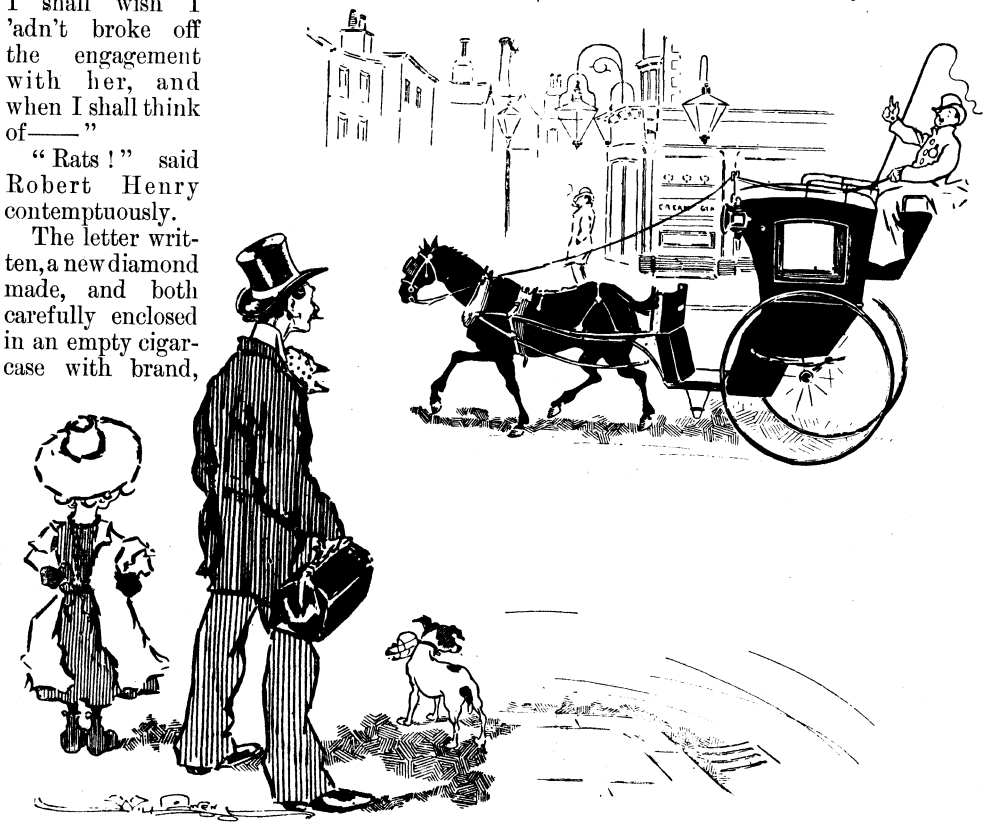
"Send her a 'andsome present," commanded the boy, taking up the large diamond again. "Send her a small one like this, and write her a letter saying that, being about to leave the neighbourhood, you feel that it is better you should part from her, much as it is against your will so to do, and you enclose a small offering and wish her every success in the dressmaking business."

"Likely as not," said Mr. Bourne wistfully, as he took pen, ink, and paper, and obeyed orders—"likely as not the time 'll come when I shall wish I 'adn't broke off the engagement with her, and when I shall think of——"

"Rats!" said Robert Henry contemptuously.

The letter written, a new diamond made, and both carefully enclosed in an empty cigar-case with brand,



"For the first time in his life hailed a cab."

"Better than the Best" on the top, Robert Henry took charge of it, and promised to leave it at the house of Miss Vennick's mother on his way home. Robert Henry poured out some of the precious fluid over a wooden top that he had in his pocket, but the wood only absorbed the fluid and remained a wooden top.

"You're wastin' it!" screamed the tobacconist. "You silly young silly. What are you doing that for? It's only minerals that it's good for!"

"Ain't wood a mineral?" asked the boy, chastened at his failure and at the deserved reproof. "*I* didn't know."

"The things you don't know, my lad," said Mr. Bourne, reassuming the management, "would fill a good-sized room. Get off 'ome now, and come round early in the morning. I shall want to get off to 'Atton Garden, and you'll have to mind the shop. Besides, I'm a bit tired. I want my usual seven hours' sleep."

Mr. Bourne saw Robert Henry through the shop, and impressing upon him the necessity of taking good care of the cigar-case, yawned and closed the door on him. The yawn was an assumed one, for he was not in the least tired. Indeed, he sat up and worked hard until the dawn peeped through the Venetian blinds and Emmett Street began to arouse itself, and then, his small stock of coals being exhausted, he made a pyramid of the dazzling jewels that he had, with the aid of nearly one half of the precious liquid, manufactured, and dozed off.

Robert Henry had to kick at the door a

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good many times in the morning before his master came wearily and but half rested to open it. Robert Henry was just beginning to blame himself for having left the place all night when the door opened; he was relieved to find that he was still a partner in the firm, and that his dreams of a palatial house in Bow Road, a gorgeous wife, six feet four in height, and a dogcart, were still possible of realisation. Mr. Bourne washed himself and dressed in his best; he wrapped the smaller diamonds in cigarette papers and placed them all in a black, shiny bag. He also spiked his moustaches and tied his cravat in a flowing manner, the better to impersonate the character of a stranger to the country.

"'Dell me the druth.'"

Then he bade Robert Henry keep his eyes open, and walking up to the junction of roads near the Asiatic Home, for the first time in his life hailed a cab.

"Bit lumpy, ain't it, guv'nor?" said the driver, as Mr. Bourne lifted the heavy little bag into the cab.

"*Oui*," replied Mr. Bourne, in the French language.

"Shall I give you a 'and?"

"*Non*," said Mr. Bourne.

"More blooming foreigners," growled the cabman. "There won't be an Englishman left soon to keep me company."

At number 142 Hatton Garden he found Mr. Lewis Schenker, Diamond Merchant of Amsterdam and London. Mr. Bourne explained in laborious broken English that he had diamonds to sell, and Mr. Schenker, who was a stout man with only just enough breath for his wants, listened without wasting a word of comment. When Mr. Bourne had finished his description of the death of the favourite aunt who had left him the diamonds, Mr. Schenker winked at him and went and locked the door of the office.

"Dell me the druth," said Mr. Schenker jovially. "Don't give us no romances."

"Messieur," protested Mr. Bourne, "I no onderstand."

"Very well," said Mr. Schenker, chuckling. "Haf your choke then, my fellow, haf your leedle choke. *I* don't gare. If you haf diamonds to sell, I buy. That is all."

"*Bon*," said Mr. Bourne.

"Show me the brecious jewels," said Mr. Schenker. "Don't vaste time."

Mr. Schenker, with a powerful glass at his eye, examined very carefully the few smaller gems that Mr. Bourne placed on the table for his inspection. Presently Mr. Schenker said he would give fifty pounds for five of them, and Mr. Bourne took them back and said that he would not let them go for a penny under five hundred pounds. Mr. Schenker begged that he might look at them again; that he might take them in his hand, but the artful Mr. Bourne would not hear of this, and prepared to leave. Mr. Schenker, affected almost to tears by this stern attitude, implored Mr. Bourne not to be a hasty man, and said, two hundred and fifty pounds. Three hundred pounds. Well, three hundred and fifty pounds, and not a penny more if it meant imperilling his life, the life of Mrs. Schenker, and the lives of the Schenker family. At three hundred and fifty pounds, therefore, the diamonds, wrapped in the cigarette papers, changed hands, and Mr. Schenker wrote a cheque which Mr. Bourne accepted. He made his way immediately down the stairs, still holding

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the precious bag. Feeling that he had done enough business for a start, he had lunch in Holborn before going on to the bank. When this agreeable duty had been performed he looked at the cheque and discovered that it was made payable to order, and as shopkeepers in Emmett Street, Limehouse, do not keep banking accounts, he was compelled to go back to Hatton Garden to request Mr. Schenker to be so good as to make it payable to bearer.

"Ah! my friend," cried Mr. Schenker, with enthusiasm. "We meet again. You want me to alder the cheque, ain't it?"

"*Si voo plait*," said Mr. Bourne.

He handed the cheque to Mr. Schenker, and that gentleman, discarding at once his general manner of hilarity, tore it into small pieces and threw them over the astonished tobacconist.

"You don't blay bractical chokes on me," screamed Mr. Schenker fiercely. "No, my fellow. I am too old for all those nonsense. Al—low me to kick you downstairs."

"Not likely," protested Mr. Bourne. "Gimme my cheque or gimme my diamonds."

"Shall I kick you downstairs?" asked Schenker, breathlessly and frantically, "or shall I send for the bolice? Choose which!"

It occurred to Mr. Bourne that his position with a bag of diamonds in the City Detective Office in Old Jewry would be difficult of explanation.

"I'll go downstairs," he said humbly.

"Better you go quick," screamed Schenker. "My vord, I haf killed a man for less."

Mr. Bourne, on the pavement in Hatton Garden, looked up at the office that he had quitted so hurriedly, and tried to think. This was the worst of having no introductions. This was the drawback of not knowing where to find an honest trader. You were liable to be swindled in this dastardly way before you——

The heated, excited face of Mr. Schenker appeared at the window, the window was thrown up, and down on the hat of Mr. Bourne were showered some small missiles.

He made his way through the busy street into Holborn and took a 'bus home. When, near the shop, K 052 engaged him in casual conversation, Mr. Bourne's knees trembled.

"We don't serve sailors," Robert Henry was saying as he entered the shop. Two Japanese were asking for cigars, and Robert Henry, seated on the counter, with lemonade and pastry by his side, was treating them in a contemptuous manner that evidently gave him much satisfaction. "Outside, if *you* please."

"Two ceegar," repeated one of the Japanese mildly.

"Get out!" shouted Robert Henry. "We're giving up business. We're coming down for repairs. We're sold out." He waved at them. "Skoot!" he said. "Now d'you understand?"

The two Japanese smiled and went amiably out of the shop. Mr. Bourne recognised them as the men who had chased Ah Lun the previous evening with a knife. He hesitated for a moment and then went after them.

"Pardon me," he said to the first little man. "What's your name?"

The little Japanese stopped and the question was repeated.

"Yoroshka," he answered.

"What ship, might I ask?" Information given.

"Sail to-night?"

"Yees," said Yoroshka. "For Yokohama."

"I wish you *bon voyage*," said Mr. Bourne, with enthusiasm. "'Ope you'll 'ave a 'appy trip." He coughed. "What ship is Ah Lun, the Chinaman, on?"

The look of smiling amiability vanished from the faces of the two little sailors.

"You know him?" demanded Yoroshka swiftly. He put his hand to the back pocket of his trousers. "You find him. I give you one pound."

"What's the grievance against him?"

"He sell me diamond," hissed Yoroshka; "it no diamond at all! Bring him to me, and I kill him!"

"Right," said Mr. Bourne; "I'll make a note of it. At present I don't know where he is no more than the dead. So long!"

The two Japanese went off reluctantly, and Mr. Bourne returned bewildered to his shop. These were not, then, perhaps, real diamonds that the liquid in the black bottle made, in which case all his anticipations of wealth were idle. And yet, if they were not real diamonds, why had the Hatton Garden merchant found difficulty in restraining his admiration when the specimens were shown to him? He walked straight through the shop into the back room and opened the bag. There they were, shining, sparkling, scintillating.

"Don't tell me they ain't di'monds!" said Mr. Bourne to nobody, very fiercely. "Don't you go 'umbugging *me!*"

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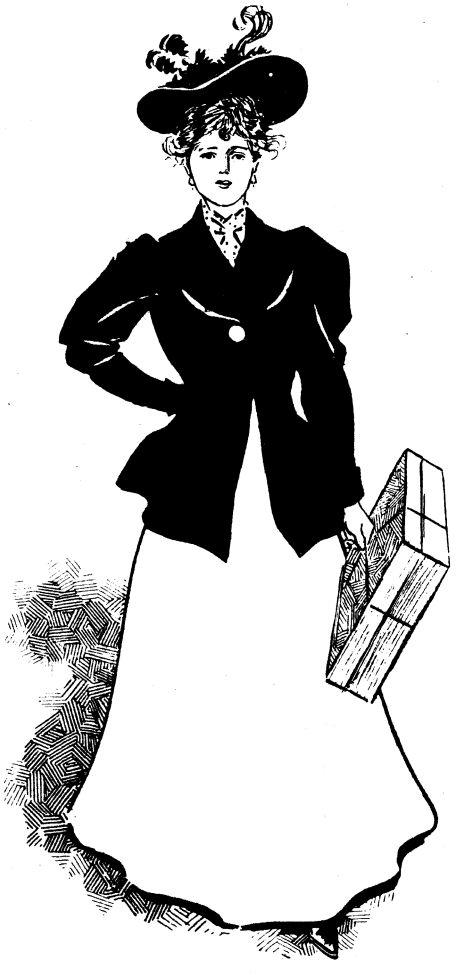
Robert Henry sauntered in and sat down in the one easy-chair in a negligent attitude.

"Well, ole man," he said familiarly, "how've you got on? How many golden sovereigns 'ave you got to 'and over to Robert Henry Wall, Esquire? Tell you what *I* thought of doing," went on the boy confidentially. "With my thirty thousand pound, or whatever it works out to, I thought



"'Coming back I met your young lady.'"

of getting over to America and 'aving a good old game of 'unting Red Indians! That's always been *my* mark!"

"I ain't got on so well as I should 'ave liked," said the tobacconist.

"It's your first start," said the boy tolerantly.

"Don't quite see how we're going to get rid of the things."

"Why, sell 'em, you juggins!" said the boy, with indignation. "'Aven't you got no sense? If you can't sell di'monds, what can you sell?"

"Look 'ere," said the tobacconist, goaded —"you're jolly clever all at once! You take one and you go and get rid of it, and come back and let me know."

"Thought *you* was going to manage the show."

"Never mind what you thought," said the tobacconist; "you take one and do as I tell you. You sell this big one 'ere for fifty pound, and you shall 'ave half the money."

"I'll take good care of that!" said the boy, wrapping the large jewel in his handkerchief. "Expect me back in ten minutes."

Mr. Bourne sat for some moments after Robert Henry's departure resting his chin upon his fists and trying, with little success, to think the matter out. There was a tap on the windowed part of the door, and he looked up wearily.

"Go away, mother," he said to the shawled figure; "we don't want no groundsel." The shawl went back from the dry, yellow, bony face, and he saw that it was Ah Lun. The Chinaman entered very quietly. He wore a dark woollen skirt; his pigtail was coiled up and concealed by the shawl. He looked like a worn old woman of some preposterous age.

"Ah Lun come see lil bot'l," he said insinuatingly.

"Whaffor?" demanded Mr. Bourne.

"Not alli gone?"

"What's it to do with you?"

"English gelman," said Ah Lun persuasively, "he give back lil black bot'l."

"Don't see the force of that argument," said the tobacconist. "What's give to me I stick to."

"No use to English gelman."

"Why ain't it any use?"

Ah Lun bent forward and whispered. As he did so, amazement, indignation, and comprehension flitted across the tobacconist's face. He had to moisten his lips before he could speak.

"And the blooming things go back to their original state the moment they pass out of the hands of the owner of the black bottle? Well, I'm——"

"He no use to English," said Ah Lun, nodding affirmatively; "he use to pol Chilaman."

"Business is business," said Mr. Bourne, "all the world over. How much did that Jap give you?"

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"He not here?" said Ah Lun, looking round affrightedly.

"I've only got to lift my little finger," said Mr. Bourne, "and Yoroskha will come up with his little knife and——"

"No, no," screamed Ah Lun appealingly. "Brave English, he no give up pol Ah Lun. Look! Yoroskha give Ah Lun moley, Ah Lun give moley to you." The Chinaman lifted his woollen skirt and found a handful of gold coins in the pocket of his blue trousers. "Take!" he cried. "No send for Yoroskha. No keep lil bot'l."

"You're 'aving it all your own way," said Mr. Bourne doubtfully, "but——" he looked at the small pile of sovereigns. They, at any rate, were genuine. "I'm not a 'ard man," said Mr. Bourne; "'ere's the bottle, and 'ere's this bag full. They're no use to an honest man like me. Be off now, and don't let me see you again."

"No flear," said Ah Lun.

And readjusting his shawl, and placing the little black bottle very carefully in his blouse, he slipped away.

"Nice go!" cried Robert Henry bitterly, almost falling into the shop. "Had a look at the thing on me way, and blow *me* if it 'adn't turned back to this. And coming 'ome I met your young lady, and she give me this note."

"More fun," said Mr. Bourne, opening the letter with a gloomy air. "I am 'aving a jolly time, I am."

The opening of the letter seemed to cheer Mr. Bourne.

"DEAREST JOHNNY,—You clever dear to make up such capital jokes. When I read your letter, I thought at first you were in earnest, but when I saw the piece of coal I knew it was only some more of your nonsense. I was much pleased with the words on the cigar box, but I fear I am not worthy of them. There is *such* a good piece on at the Pavilion this week; shall we try and go?—Much love and kisses from your own, LOUISA."

"After all," said Mr Bourne "diamonds are dangerous things—specially when they ain't diamonds."

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A Doubtful Moment.

From the Picture by S. E. Waller.

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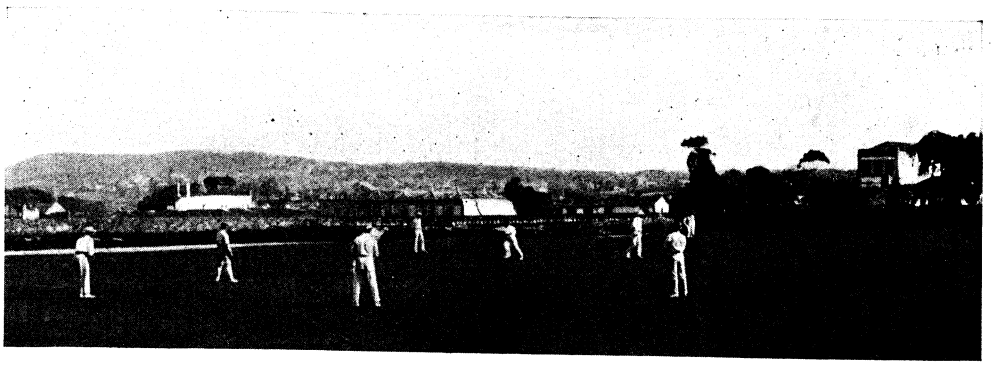

THE CRICKET GROUND, OPORTO: T. WESTRAY'S ELEVEN IN THE FIELD.

ENGLISH CRICKETERS ABROAD.

By Pelham F. Warner.

IT is a truism that wherever Englishmen are gathered together there will be found the national game in full swing; and thus it happens fortunately for the devoted cricketer that, while the Mother Country is given over to "winter's rains and ruins" (to say nothing of a game called football), a band of King Willow's loyal subjects is doing its best to uphold his Majesty's dignity in sunny South Africa. As a prelude to the record of our doings out here I venture to hope that some account of our adventures on foreign fields earlier in the year may be not without interest for the Windsor readers.

To the man in the street the idea of cricket in Portugal seems absurd; but the fact remains that the game flourishes in Oporto, though perhaps only in a small way. The Portuguese, I will say at once, take no interest whatever in the sport, and it is entirely due to the English colony that cricket is played at all. Mr. Tom Westray was kind enough to ask me to form one of his team that visited Oporto last year, and I readily jumped at the invitation, having heard the most enchanting description of Oporto and its people from the members of Mr. Westray's first team that had played in Oporto in the spring of 1895.

We left Dover on the *Elbe*, which belongs to the line of Coverley & Westray, and had been specially chartered for our service on this trip. At the last minute R. N. Douglas joined the team in the place of A. J. L. Hill, so the side was as follows: T. Westray (capt.), F. W. Westray, S. A. P. Kitcat, R. N. Douglas, L. C. V. Bathurst, P. F. Warner, H. R. Bromley Davenport, W. N. Fletcher, A. C. Taylor, H. G. Peachey, and E. A. Field. From these names it will be seen that we had a pretty good side, strong in batting and fielding, and with a couple of more than useful left-handed bowlers in Bathurst and Bromley Davenport. One sea voyage is much like another, so I will not bore my readers with a description of it.

Oporto, *leal e invicta citade* (the loyal and unconquered city), is situated on the north side of the Douro, three miles from its mouth, and contains about 130,000 inhabitants. Nearly all the houses are red-roofed, and the town is hilly and very picturesque. Several of the cricketers came on board to meet us, and having landed, we underwent the ordeal of having our luggage searched at the Customs; and here I may remark that it takes about four Portuguese to search one bag.

On the first of the two days set down for our match with the Oporto Cricket Club, rain fell with annoying persistency most of the morning, and it was found impossible to make a start until 3.15, when the Oporto captain, H. S. Ponsonby, a son of Sir Spencer Ponsonby Fane, won the toss and decided to bat. Bathurst and Bromley Davenport were in charge of the bowling, and proved for a time, at all events, quite unplayable. Six wickets fell for 4 runs, and it seemed quite possible that the innings might not realise double figures. Some good and plucky play by Turner averted such a calamity, but the total in the end only

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amounted to 33. It is only fair to state that the wicket played very badly, and one or two of the home batsmen experienced decidedly bad luck.

At the drawing of stumps we had made 250 for 7 wickets. Nearly all the English residents were spectators of the match, but hardly any Portuguese were on the ground. About two men and a boy looked over an adjoining wall, but they did not appear to be carried away by enthusiasm. On the following morning the last 3 wickets only added 4 runs, the innings closing for 254. The second innings of Oporto was chiefly noticeable for a very good innings of 59 by Colclough, and some hard hitting by G. Dagge. Colclough went in first and was eighth out at 112. His cutting especially was excellent. Dagge made some splendid drives, and treated Douglas with great contempt, twice in one over hitting him out of the ground. Taylor bowled with great success and captured 4 wickets for 5 runs.

MR. T. WESTRAY, CAPTAIN OF THE ENGLISH ELEVEN.

Much disappointment was expressed at the poor show of the Oporto team. The wicket certainly was at its worst in the first innings; but, although their fielding was quite smart, it must be confessed that their bowling was of only a moderate character. Colclough proved himself much the best all-round cricketer, but several others showed promise, especially in fielding. Nervousness had, I feel sure, a great deal to do with their collapse. The result of the match was thus a victory for us by an innings and 103 runs, the scores being

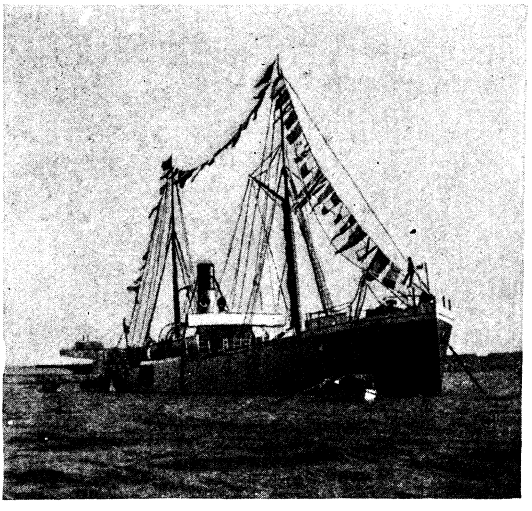
T. Westray's XI. ... 254
Oporto ..... 33 and 118

The cricket match came to an end about four o'clock in the afternoon, and a tennis tournament was at once started. The courts are just off the cricket field, and being of gravel, consequently play very fast and true. The Oporto representatives beat us by three matches to one. In the evening Mr. and Mrs. Roger Coverley gave a dance, which we all enjoyed immensely.

The second match was against an XI. representing Portugal. Dr. Colclough captained the home team, and places were found for three Lisbon men, viz., Hardwick, Reid, and Gibbons. The distance from Lisbon to Oporto is not more than 180 miles, but the journey takes nearly twelve hours, and this, too, by the express. Still, as the train stops at every station for about twenty minutes while the engine-driver and guards smoke a cigarette and talk about the weather and the crops, the time occupied by the journey is not, after all, so great. If a train should by any chance arrive even a minute before it is due the engine-driver is fined! Further comment is useless.

But to return to the cricket. Westray won the toss and decided to put our opponents in, but though a fair start was made, 79 was the total realised. Up to a certain point in our first innings the game was fairly even, our sixth wicket falling with the total at 110; but the subsequent partnership of the two Westrays put quite a different complexion on the match. Eventually we were all dismissed for 263. Portugal, at their second attempt, did better. Colclough, Cobb, Hardwick, and Warre played well, but were badly supported, and again we won easily in an innings. Taylor's analysis for the match was 10 wickets for 83 runs. The result was—

T. Westray's XI. 263
Portugal ..... 79 and 109



THE "ELBE" (WESTRAY, COVERLEY AND CO.),
The vessel on which we made the journey to and from Oporto.

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Though easily beaten in this match, the cricket of our rivals showed marked improvement all round. To begin with, the bowling was infinitely better than in the first game, while I am not saying too much when I state that the fielding was very good indeed, Turner, who made three fine catches, and Warre especially doing well. The batting, too, was marked by more confidence, and I am positive that in the next year or two Oporto cricketers will improve immensely, and if the wicket could be made a good one, there would be still more chance of the the game flourishing in Oporto. The wicket cannot possibly be called even a fair one. The soil is sandy, and plantains abound, so it will readily be seen how hard it is to prepare a good wicket. Cocoanut matting might, of course, be used, but the cricketers of Oporto are rather proud of the fact that theirs is the only ground in Spain or Portugal on which a grass wicket is obtainable. It is always, in my opinion, better to play, if possible, on turf than on matting, and the wicket in Oporto is not, I think, so bad as to necessitate the introduction of matting. Still, there can be little doubt that the cricket would be considerably improved if a better wicket were possible, and already there is considerable talk of getting some good man out from England to see what can be done to the ground. The last four days were spent in seeing the sights of the town, and picnics up the Douro and to the slate quarries at Vallonga.

A golf match was arranged for the Sunday on the links at Espinho, but though an attempt to play was made, the weather was so wretched that the game had to be left unfinished. Rain in torrents, accompanied by a high wind, quite spoilt the play, and everyone got soaked to the skin. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Coverley subsequently gave a picnic up the Douro to Cintra D'Olveira, and another day we drove out to Vallonga, which is about ten miles from Oporto. On the following day we left Oporto in the good ship *Elbe*, for Portsmouth, after a delightful trip. The hospitality of the people in Oporto knows no bounds—each man vied with his neighbour to give us the really good time we had. That we had numerous dances goes without saying—there were five in the ten days—and that we enjoyed them one and all enormously also follows as a fact. On all sides we were fêted, and none of us will, I feel sure, forget Oporto, the loyal and unconquered city.

H. G. Peachey. P. F. Warner. G. Dagge.

E. A. Field. L. C. V. Bathurst.

A SNAPSHOT ON THE OPORTO CRICKET GROUND.

I had retained so many pleasant recollections of my visit to the States during the autumn of 1897 that I readily acceded to the request of the associated clubs of Philadelphia to bring out a second team, and on August 27 we set sail from Liverpool in the R.M.S. *Gallia*, of the Beaver Line, for Montreal. The side was as follows: P. F. Warner (captain), C. J. Burnup, F. Mitchell, C. O. H. Sewell, V. T. Hill, B. J. T. Bosanquet, G. E. Winter, E. H. Bray, E. F. Penn, E. C. Lee, J. L. Ainsworth, R. S. A. Warner, and R. Berens. Kirk, the dressing-room attendant at the Trent Bridge ground,

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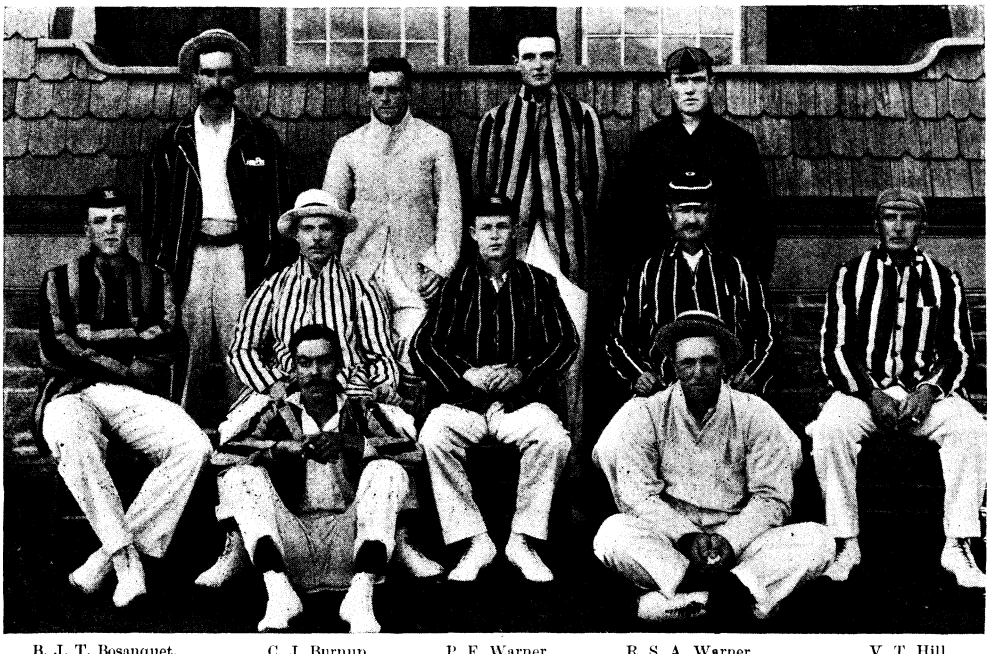
Nottingham, accompanied the team as servant, and once more thoroughly earned the sobriquet of "prince of couriers."

On the day after our arrival, without any practice, we commenced the first match of the tour against XIV. of the Eastern League, who were captained by W. R. Gilbert. Ainsworth was unable to play for us, owing to a chill, and, as subsequent events proved, he would almost certainly have been more than ordinarily successful, as the wicket was just made for him, heavy rain on each night and a powerful sun during the day having rendered the turf false and treacherous. Our batting was poor, a fact caused no doubt by the voyage and a lack of practice, Burnup, Mitchell, and Bray being the only men to make any runs. The game was an interesting one from start to finish, but we had plenty in hand at the end, and won easily by 88 runs. The scores were: Englishmen 130 and 105, XIV. of the Eastern League 82 and 65. Penn, Bosanquet, and Winter bowled very successfully for us, but they were immensely assisted by the condition of the ground, one ball shooting dead, and the next getting up perfectly straight. Under these circumstances it is not to be wondered at that the scoring ruled low on both sides.

We were most hospitably entertained during our stay in Montreal, and, amongst other things, were taken to a baseball match. Buffalo *v.* Montreal, who are both high up in the League, were opponents, and we witnessed a most interesting game; but what struck us most was the attitude of the crowd towards the umpire, who rejoiced in the name of Grubber. One "rooter" in particular, who was sitting near us, made himself most offensive, his mildest remark being, "How much did they pay you, Grubber?" Whenever a decision was given, the rival supporters howled at the umpire in approval, or not, as the case might be. In the second half of the match two umpires officiated, Grubber having retired, and wisely so. A point arose on which the umpires could not agree, and the game eventually ended in something like a free fight.

Baseball does not, in my opinion, compare with cricket. The throwing is the best part of it, the fielders being wonderfully accurate in their returns to the base. All the side except the pitcher wear large gloves, like a soup-plate, on the left hand, and this of course makes catching "long flies" and "short flies" a comparatively easy matter. The wicket-keeper, or "the catcher," as he is called, wears a large mask and a sort of breast-plate. He certainly needs both.

R. Berens. E. H. Bray. J. L. Ainsworth. G. E. Winter.



B. J. T. Bosanquet. C. J. Burnup. C. O. H. Sewell. P. F. Warner. R. S. A. Warner. F. Mitchell. V. T. Hill.

THE ENGLISH TEAM IN AMERICA.

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THE PHILADELPHIA TEAM.

Photo by Rolfe, Philadelphia.

After four very pleasant days in Montreal, we journeyed by night to Toronto, on the Canadian-Pacific Railway, arriving there on a Sunday morning. The next three days saw us playing a representative Ontario XI. on the Rosedale ground. Penn and Lee stood down from our side, both of them suffering from sore throats, which eventually developed into scarlet fever. This was most unfortunate for us, as they were both bowlers, Lee, too, a dangerous and plucky batsman. Their valuable services were, of course, lost to us for the rest of the tour, but luckily they were never at any time seriously ill, and though still detained in hospital at Toronto when we sailed for England, they were then quite convalescent, and a few days afterwards were released from their prison. Owing to the danger of infection, none of us were allowed to see the two invalids, but every possible care was taken of them, and here I must thank, from the bottom of my heart, the many good friends in Toronto who were so kind to our two poor sick men. It was a time of great anxiety, as Burnup also caught a severe sore throat, and at one time it looked any odds on his getting scarlet fever; but he pulled through, and did yeoman service for us during the remaining matches.

And now to the match itself. We won the toss and went in to bat on a wicket which, though helping the bowlers considerably for the first hour, afterwards played very well, and was certainly the second best wicket we met on the tour, the best being at Manheim, Philadelphia, in the final test match. We stayed in the whole of the first day and part of the second, our total reaching 437. The Ontario XI. could only put together 133 and 164, and we thus won easily in an innings. Amongst the spectators was Lord Herschell.

Not a little elated by our success, we left Toronto for Niagara, and after seeing the "Falls" early the next morning, left for Philadelphia in the famous "Black Diamond" express. The distance from Niagara to Philadelphia is 480 miles, and we did the journey in just over ten hours. At one period we ran seventy-nine miles in seventy minutes. We went through the most beautiful country, a grand view of which could be obtained from the observation car at the rear of the train. Our two matches against the Gentlemen of Philadelphia were played at Wissahickon, the ground of the Philadelphia Club. A great deal of rain had fallen just previously, and the wicket all through the game was in favour of the bowlers; in fact, I cannot remember ever playing on such a bit of "bird-lime." Burnup was in bed,

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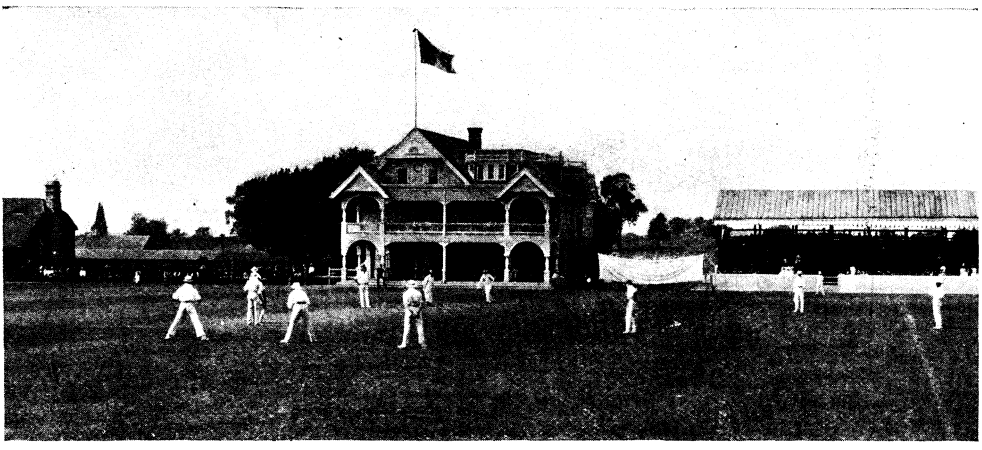
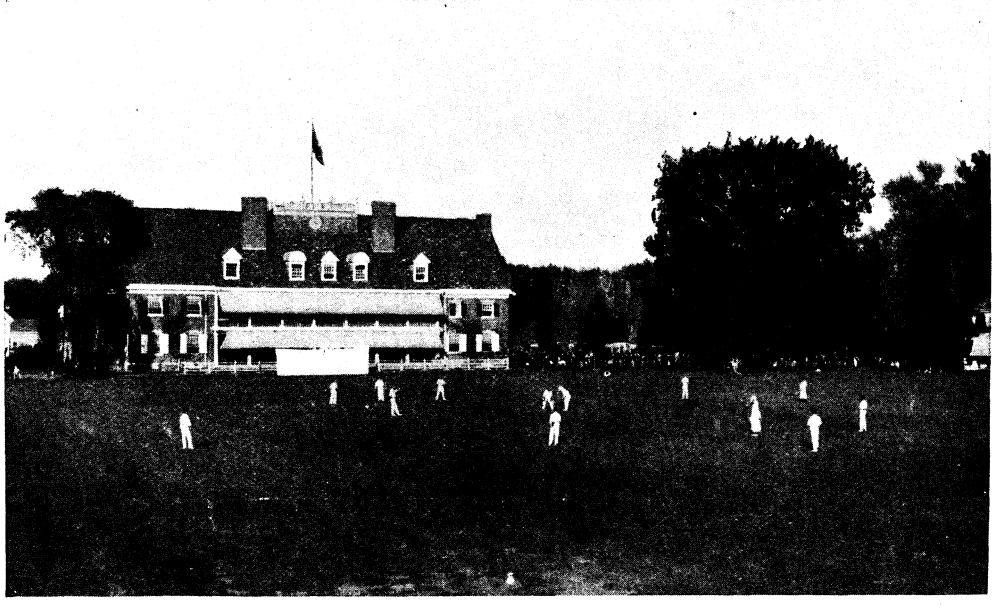


THE CRICKET GROUND AT MONTREAL.

and we took the field without him, a substitute being kindly allowed us. The Philadelphians won the toss, but could only put together 94, Ainsworth bowling beautifully and capturing 6 wickets for 54 runs. We started well by scoring 44 for 1 wicket, but after this there was a dreadful collapse, and at the call of time 8 wickets had fallen for 79 runs. The morning papers were very amusing next day in their account of the match. Here goes one of them: "When the Philadelphians had all been disposed of, by three o'clock yesterday, for the pitiful total of 94, there was a Manila Bay aspect about the affair, with Captain Warner for the nonce in the *rôle* of Cousin George Dewey, that was not altogether pleasing to the spectators. But before the sun had sunk to rest Captain Brown had been amply revenged, for eight of the opposing fleet had been riddled and forced on the beach by the rapid-fire guns of Clark and King, and the corkscrew torpedoes discharged by Morton. Warner himself, ably seconded by Mitchell and the man whose name sounds like a bunch of roses, had made an heroic effort to



THE LAST TEST MATCH: P. F. WARNER AND C. J. BURNUP AT THE WICKETS, MANHEIM, PHILADELPHIA, THE GROUND OF THE GERMANTOWN CRICKET CLUB.

Photo by Rolfe, Philadelphia.

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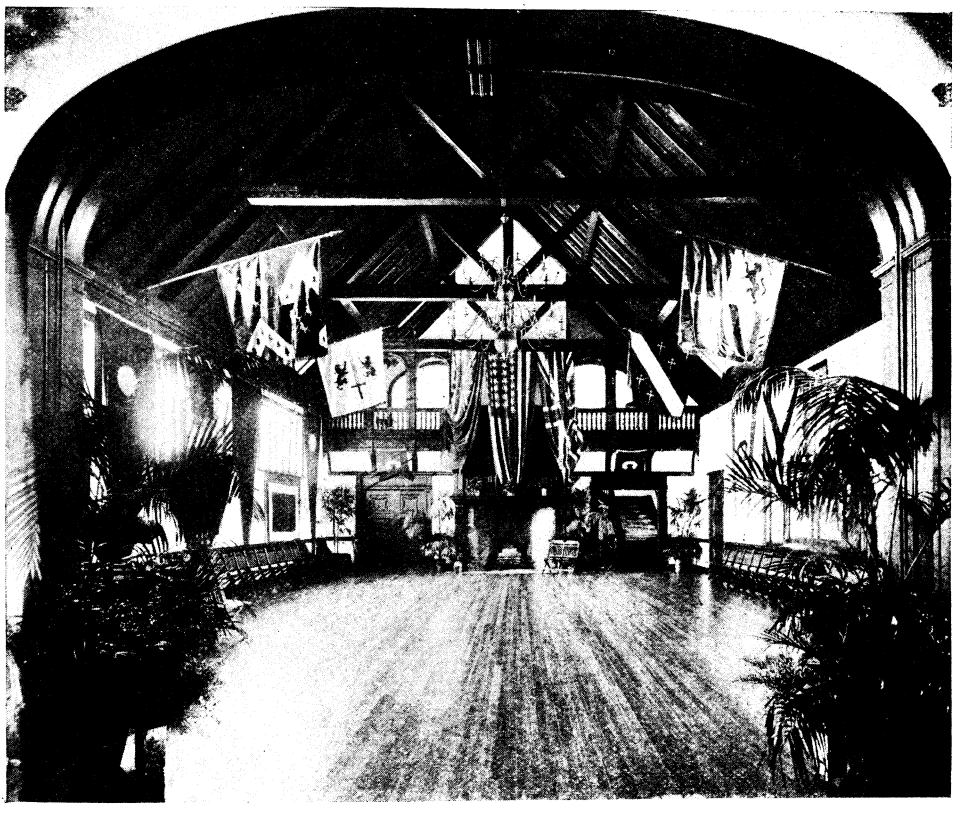
stem the tide; but their attempts were of little avail, and when firing ceased they were all but ready to hoist the white flag." Another, describing the weather, said: "The rays of the sun hugged and kissed you with unseemly warmth at Wissahickon Heights yesterday afternoon. They brushed your collar away and kind of converted you into a hot water sponge. But they were needed, absolutely necessary as a matter of health, for the scene upon the green in the centre of that human square was damp and dismal, disease-breeding and depressing. Our hopes were melting away, and the vapours that rose penetrated to the very bone and chilled you through and through."



THE BALL ROOM IN THE CLUB HOUSE AT CATONSVILLE, BALTIMORE, AS DECORATED IN HONOUR OF THE ENGLISH CRICKETERS.

The innings closed for 84—10 runs behind our opponents' total. The second innings of the home team produced no more than 59, Ainsworth actually taking 5 wickets for 13 runs. Our fielding was excellent, and Bray kept wicket splendidly, catching five men and stumping three in the match. With only 70 runs to win, we obtained the required number for the loss of two wickets—Mitchell (20 not out) and Sewell (25 not out) playing capitally. On both days of the match there was a large crowd, the gate on the Saturday being well over 5,000. The ladies always turn out in great force for the "international matches," as they are called in the States, and this game was no exception to the general rule.

Our fixture against the New York C.C. came off at Staten Island, and ended in an easy victory for us by an innings and 247 runs. The New York XI. collapsed completely in the first innings, Ainsworth and Bosanquet dismissing them for 49. The New York team did better at their second attempt, and made 123, a fairly good score, considering that the wicket had crumbled to pieces.

Back to Philadelphia again for our match *v.* XVIII. Colts and a captain, at Haverford, the ground of the Merion C.C. The wicket was again very much in favour of the bowlers, and with nineteen men in the field

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run-getting was no easy matter. Heavy rain at lunch time on the third day robbed us of a certain victory, seeing that we wanted only 70 runs to win, and had still 9 wickets to fall. The scores were: Colts 77 and 159; Englishmen 133 and 30 for 1 wicket.

There was a big crowd on the ground on the Saturday afternoon, and the club house presented a very gay scene. The band of the First Regiment was in attendance, and played "God Save the Queen" and "The Star-spangled Banner" amidst great enthusiasm, the crowd standing up when our National Anthem was played. Every man on the ground took off his hat, and the advocates of an Anglo-American alliance must have rejoiced at this pronounced bit of good feeling towards the Mother Country. In the evening a dinner given in our honour by the members of the Merion C.C. was followed by a really splendid dance; we all enjoyed ourselves immensely, and it is rumoured that more than one Anglo-American alliance may come off. From Philadelphia to Baltimore is an easy cry, and here we defeated XV. of the local cricketers by 9 wickets. The wicket was a crumbling one from the start, and scoring ruled low. On the first night of the match there was a very jolly dinner-dance, given at the Catonsville Club.

And now we come to our return match against the Gentlemen of Philadelphia, and surely a better game was never played. The encounter came off at Manheim, the ground of the Germantown Cricket Club, and the interest was sustained right up to the very last ball. Glorious weather favoured the match, and the wicket was a really good one—certainly the best I have ever seen in America. For the fifth time running I lost the toss, but the Philadelphians took little advantage of their good fortune and were all dismissed for 143. At the drawing of stumps we had made 114 for 4 wickets, and so looked to have a good deal the best of the match; but on the folfowing morning J. B. King bowled magnificently, and the last 6 wickets falling for 19 runs, we found ourselves in a minority of 10 runs, as was the case in the first test match at Wissahickon. The home team's second innings was noteworthy for a fine innings of 53 by A. M. Wood, who exhibited much skill in playing the ball on the on-side, but with this notable exception few of the other batsmen could do anything with Ainsworth, and the innings closed for 147. Ainsworth in the match took 13 wickets for 116 runs, and better left-handed bowling I do not wish to see.

With 158 to win, the betting was about evens on our obtaining the runs; but when the four best wickets had fallen for 69 runs, I must candidly confess that I thought we should be beaten. But I was reckoning without Hill when I anticipated defeat. When he went in 5 wickets had fallen for 96 runs, and the slightest mistake would have given the Philadelphians the victory. "Vernon," however, was in great form, and, thanks to his admirable 41 not out, we pulled through by 4 wickets, after one of the keenest games it has ever been my good fortune to take part in. The Philadelphians played up hard to the end.

We left Philadelphia for Chicago, where we spent two days in sightseeing before our match. Both sides played twelve, Kirk being pressed into service. We won the toss, and on a slow wicket made 298. Chicago replied with but 74 and 83 for 7 wickets, and then the rain came down in torrents and robbed us of a certain victory.

This match brought a very successful tour to an end, our record being—played, 8; won, 6; drawn, 2; lost, 0. Mitchell, with an average of 35, was our most successful batsman, and Hill, Bosanquet, Sewell, and Burnup all did well; but undoubtedly the feature of the tour was the splendid bowling of Ainsworth. Owing to business, Ainsworth has never yet been seen in county cricket, but he is almost sure to be asked to play for Lancashire next season, and if he can get away he will, I feel sure, do well. A man who can take 75 wickets for 6 runs apiece, must be a good bowler. At any rate, the powers that be at Old Trafford will do well to give him a good trial.

Our return voyage was made on the *Majestic*, of the White Star Line. I think I may say that the tour was in every way a great success. The only thing to mar it was the bad luck that befell Penn and Lee. In every place we visited we were most hospitably entertained, and every member of the team will, I feel sure, always retain pleasant recollections of Canada and the States, and the many good sportsmen and charming people we met there. And now I am hoping for an equally enjoyable tour with Lord Hawke's team in South Africa.

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THE SMALLEST CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY IN THE WORLD.

By A. de Burgh.

Illustrated from Photographs.

THERE is a tract of mountain and vale lying between Austria and Switzerland, near the stony bed of the Rhine, which forms a sovereign principality, reigned over by a prince who finds a place in the "Almanack of Gotha"—that register of the high and mighty of Europe—at the side of the Queen of England, the Czar, and the Emperors of Austria and Germany.

John II. Maria Francis Placide, reigning Prince (Fürst) of Liechtenstein and Duke of Trappau and Jägerndorf, wields his sceptre over about sixty square miles of territory, of which Vaduz, a good-sized village, is the capital. On the south and west the principality borders on Switzerland, in the east and north on Austria (Tyrol). The frontier is duly marked by posts in the national colours—red and blue. On the west the land lies low, and the upper Rhine forms here a natural barrier. There are three bridges spanning the river which allow access to this smallest of sovereign states. On the east there are high mountains with only few passes, making an entry difficult and even dangerous. But, in spite of the separation by high and almost impassable mountains, in which is situated the strongly fortified Luziensteig, Liechtenstein and Austria are, politically, closely allied.

The principality of Monaco is proverbially the smallest of independent European States, but Liechtenstein is the smallest constitutional monarchy in the world. Her constitution dates from 1862, and was amended and much improved in 1878; her present connection with Austro-Hungary dates from 1852, in which year she entered into a customs and postal union with her neighbour. Austria supplies the custom house officials and collects the duties on goods entering Liechtenstein, and in return pays to the principality yearly a sum variously reported to amount to from £2,000 to

VADUZ, CAPITAL OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN.

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£5,000. She also provides Liechtenstein with postage stamps, and collects the revenue derived from this source, paying all expenses connected with the service, and pocketing any profit which may be made. Austria has certainly not the worst of the bargain.

A peculiarity of this Liliputian monarchy is the habitual absence of the sovereign. Since 1866 he has only once visited his lands; he resides and holds his Court at a magnificent palace he possesses in Vienna, or at one of the many castles or country seats he calls his own. However, the Parliament (Landtag) meets at Vaduz, and consists of fifteen members, of whom three are nominated by the Prince; the others are elected by the male subjects of Liechtenstein who have passed their twenty-fourth year. There are only a few officers in the pay of Prince and country, of whom the principal one is the Chief Administrator, who is also President of the Parliament. Then there is a Secretary of State, a Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Chief Justice (who is the only judge in the realm), the Government Engineer, and the Director of Forests. These gentlemen constitute the Cabinet; but Prince John II. has also at Vienna a Privy Council which serves as a court of appeal in criminal and civil cases, and as a kind of Upper House.

The Parliament meets at Vaduz at a season when the members are not able to follow their ordinary calling of farmers and vine-growers, etc., and when they are therefore at leisure. There are no distinct political parties in this august assembly; and as there is generally little business before the House, and the parliamentary procedure is simple, there is mostly a remarkable unanimity of opinion, and the most important affairs need but little time for settlement. Anything approaching a great debate is almost unknown. However, there are a few exceptions to prove the rule, and different opinions were recently upheld on certain matters with the greatest obstinacy. The Administrator having been quite powerless to reconcile the opponents, each party sent a deputation to the Prince in Vienna to lay their views before him and argue for their side. The Privy Council was then consulted, gave its opinion, and the Prince's decision ended the dispute.

THE CASTLE OF HOHEN-LIECHTENSTEIN, FORMERLY THE ROYAL RESIDENCE OF THE PRINCES OF LIECHTENSTEIN.

John II. was born in 1840 at Eisgrub, in Moravia, and is a bachelor. He is one of the largest landed proprietors in Austro-Hungary, possessing ninety-nine castles and properties (which is the limit allowed to any Austrian subject to possess); and one of the most interesting anomalies concerning this reigning Prince is that, although a sovereign in his own land, he is a subject in Austria, and sits as such in the House of Lords of the Austrian portion of the dual monarchy. He is immensely wealthy, and his collection of pictures, ancient and modern, for which he has built a beautiful gallery in Vienna, is one of the sights of the Austrian capital. He holds high rank in the Austrian army, and is a knight of the "Golden Fleece," the highest order in the gift of Francis Joseph, and of most of the distinguished orders of foreign countries. He is a most generous ruler, and by no means forgets the needs of his subjects, although he hardly ever sees any of them. He has built a very fine Gothic church in Vaduz at a cost of £15,000, and another, somewhat smaller, at Schaan; he has founded and endowed an excellent girls' school at Balzers and a middle class college at Vaduz, and has almost entirely borne the heavy expenses connected with the most pressing national public work—the embankment of the Rhine.

There is no doubt that although for some reason he avoids his country, he is spending

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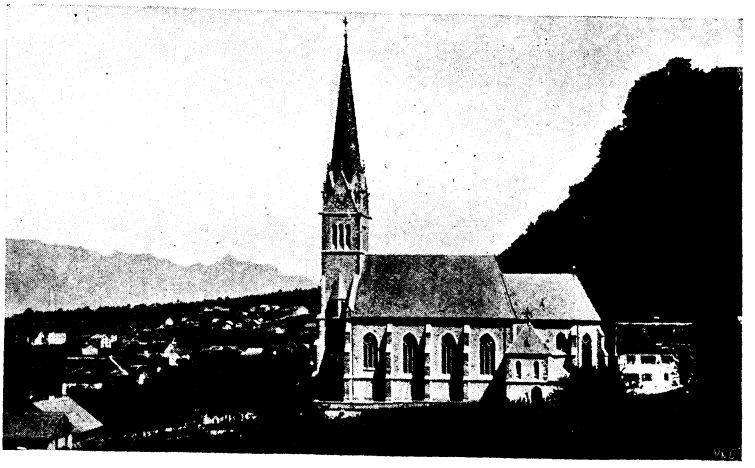
much more on it than he draws from it. The Prince is, therefore, very popular in his principality, as may be perceived by the fact that there is hardly one household which does not give the place of honour to the portrait of the beloved and respected John II. He is also much liked in Vienna, where he is *persona gratissima* at Court, and a very prominent personage, in spite of his dislike of ostentation and display. His tastes are refined, he is a scientist, a sincere patron of art, a lover of music and the drama, and withal a thorough sportsman.



THE NEW GOTHIC CHURCH AT VADUZ, PRESENTED TO HIS CAPITAL BY THE REIGNING PRINCE OF LIECHTENSTEIN.

To speak of the Liechtensteiners, there is no doubt they are not descendants of the Teutons, but of the Romans, as they are closely related to their neighbours in the French cantons of Switzerland. The commerce of the tiny monarchy is insignificant — the occupation of the inhabitants is almost entirely farming and the cultivation of the grape vine, from which an excellent wine is produced. The morals of this contented people are of an extremely high standard, their family life is irreproachable, in their dealings with each other they are most honourable, and crime is of a very rare occurrence; and here we meet with another strange fact — the whole principality does not possess a single prison. If a crime is committed the culprit is sent to the neighbouring Austrian town of Feldkirch, and the Liechtenstein Government pays a stipulated sum for the keep of the criminal in durance vile. When a crime has been committed the accused is first tried by the local judge (Chief Justice), on appeal by the Prince's Privy Council in Vienna, and upon appeal from their decision the case is revised by the Court of Appeal of the Austrian Empire in Vienna. The rarity of a criminal is quite extraordinary, and crime itself is looked upon with unspeakable scorn and terror. We remember ourselves how we were impressed at one of our visits to Vaduz by the terrible excitement apparently existing among the inhabitants of this generally so peaceful town. Was it a declaration of war? or, worse, was the enemy marching already towards the capital? Work was suspended everywhere, the people, men, women, and children, were standing in groups in the streets engaged in seemingly most momentous converse. We noticed looks on all sides, sad, terrified, ominous, frightened! A thief had been discovered that morning in that exquisitely moral town, a thief—fortunately not a Liechtensteiner, for he was a Swiss—who had actually committed a theft in one of the outhouses in Vaduz. He had stolen (oh, heinous crime!) two fowls! What a terrible affair! The villain had been marched off to Feldkirch, but the awestruck populace had not as yet recovered their wonted calm, although it was now six o'clock in the evening. We were told the present case was the first in the current year, and it was now August. We certainly never before heard of a stolen brace of chickens having created such a profound sensation and such a stir as we observed on this occasion.

It may be befitting here to state that although the disturbed state of the populace just mentioned was not due to the outbreak of war, there is, nevertheless, a state of war existing in the land even at this peaceful period, and with no less a Power than the Empire of Germany, or, at least, the Prussian part of it. The hostilities broke out in 1866 between Prussia and Austria, the latter was joined in the struggle by all of the South German States, and as a matter of course also by Liechtenstein, which mobilised her army of sixty-six men, all told, under Captain Rhinberger, who marched into Austrian territory in order to join the field forces of

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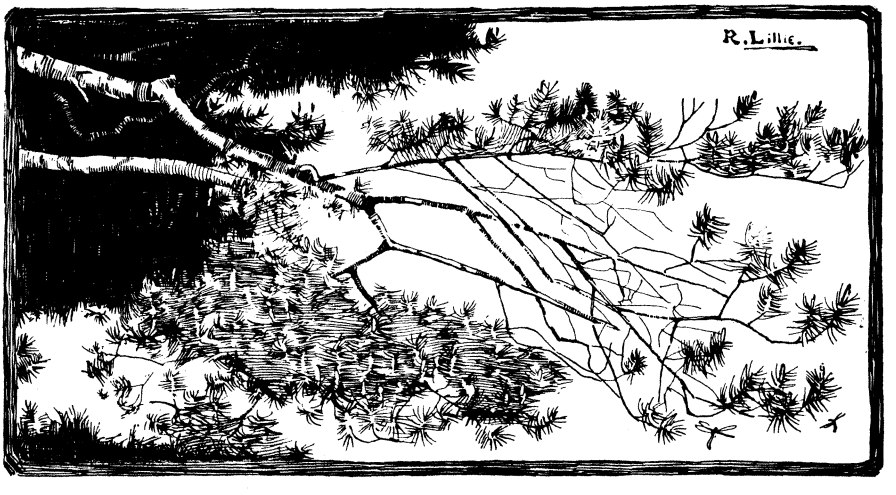
his ally in Bohemia. Rhinberger and his men had arrived at Arlberg when the news came of the disastrous battle of Königgrätz, which in a few short hours destroyed the power of the Southern Empire in the ancient German Confederation. Rumours of peace followed rapidly, and there seemed to be no further chance for the Liechtenstein soldiers to show their prowess, and sadly they returned to their homes, disappointed, no doubt, but at least unconquered, undefeated. In 1868 Liechtenstein disbanded her army and by act of parliament for ever absolved her subjects from all liability to military service. After the passage of the bill granting this great boon, it was discovered that as Liechtenstein two years previously had taken up arms against Prussia, which is, according to the code of nations, equivalent to a declaration of war, she was actually now in a state of war, as she had entirely forgotten to enter into a treaty of peace, to terminate hostilities with that Power. What makes this state of affairs still more ludicrous is the fact that the little monarchy has now been for more than thirty years without a vestige of an army. Whether a treaty of peace will be ever concluded has become now very problematic; to all intents and purposes the Liechtensteiners and Prussians are upon the best of terms when they visit each other's country, the actual state of hostility being generally ignored.

Before we take leave of this remarkable little state we must say a few words as to her history. Since Liechtenstein has become independent there is not much to tell, but it would be interesting to know by what clever tricks her Prince, in the days when feudal powers were broken and all small lordships were, so to say, swallowed up by their more powerful neighbours, escaped the general disaster. We can only presume that he was a diplomat of eminence and that his principality formed a stronghold coveted by too many to make it safe for anyone to take it. There are still in existence various ruins of castles which were once strongly fortified, when lords and people alike had great renown for their valour. Liechtenstein territory was frequently the scene of hotly contested battles, of which the last and most important was one fought in 1799 between the French under Marshal Massena and the Austrians under Hotze.

The photographs we reproduce comprise a general view of Vaduz, with the castle of Hohen-Liechtenstein on the left, overlooking the town. This was in ancient times the residence of the Prince, but is now partly in ruins and is let to a farmer. The wine growing on the mountain slopes round the castle is famous for its delicious flavour. We also give our readers a view of the castle itself. Some parts of the building are very old, most likely even of Roman origin, but the larger part dates from the sixteenth century.



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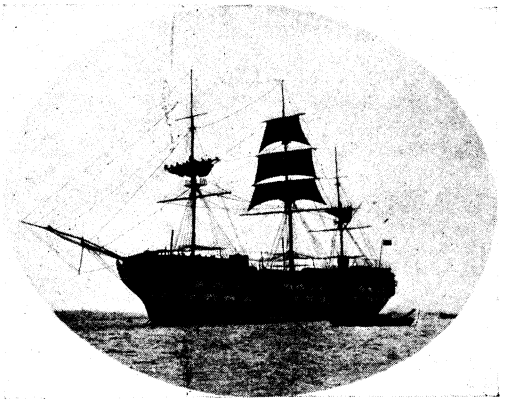

H.M.S. "WORCESTER."

WITH A CAMERA ON BOARD THE "WORCESTER."

By Captain George T. Watkins.

BOYS, boys, boys, and still more boys! This is the one thing that impresses the stranger who walks through Greenhithe on a Saturday afternoon. Some are cycling, some are walking, some are talking, some are weighing the respective merits of the various delectables on sale at the "tuck-shop"; but one and all bear a strong family likeness in the matter of healthy brown faces and sturdy, well-drilled figures. This resemblance is further emphasised by their dress—a trim naval uniform that one encounters on every hand, in all sizes, from "aged eleven" to "aged eighteen."

If the aforesaid stranger possesses a particle of self-respect, however, he will never dream of asking "Who and what are these?" because such an inquiry would—in the eyes of the youths—betray a most deplorable ignorance. To all intents and purposes the whole place practically exists for the accommodation of H.M.S. *Worcester*, which is anchored off in the river. This is the nautical training college of the Port of London, and as such plays an important part in the welfare of the nation that rules the seas. Wednesdays and Saturdays, being half-holidays, are the most convenient times for visiting the ship. A small boat meets one at the landing-stage, manned by a "crew" of bright-faced cadets. These are under the command of a petty officer, who issues his orders with all the dignity and precision of a full-blown naval commander, his subordinates obeying him with equal promptness. On board one is met by the captain superintendent—Captain Wilson-Barker. No man could be better suited than he to be at the head of affairs, as, in addition to his high professional attainments, he is the type of man who appeals strongly to a boy's nature. Hobbies of all sorts he encourages; he is an ardent naturalist, and has "collections" galore. And I may add that we are indebted to his

CAPTAIN D. WILSON-BARKER, F.R.S.E.,
Younger Brother of the Trinity House.

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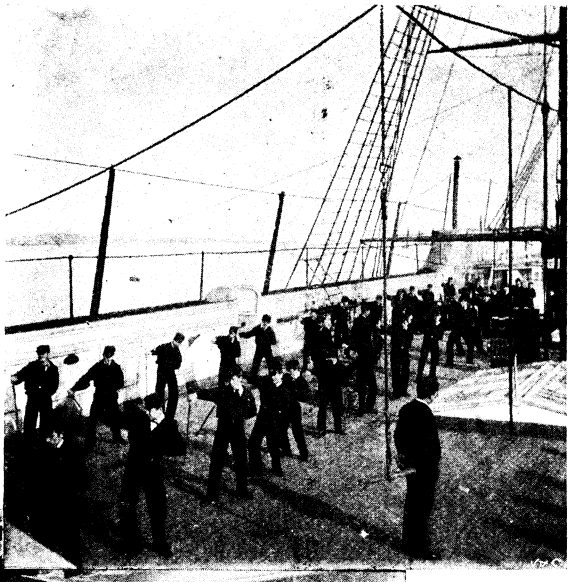
camera for the excellent photos illustrating this article.

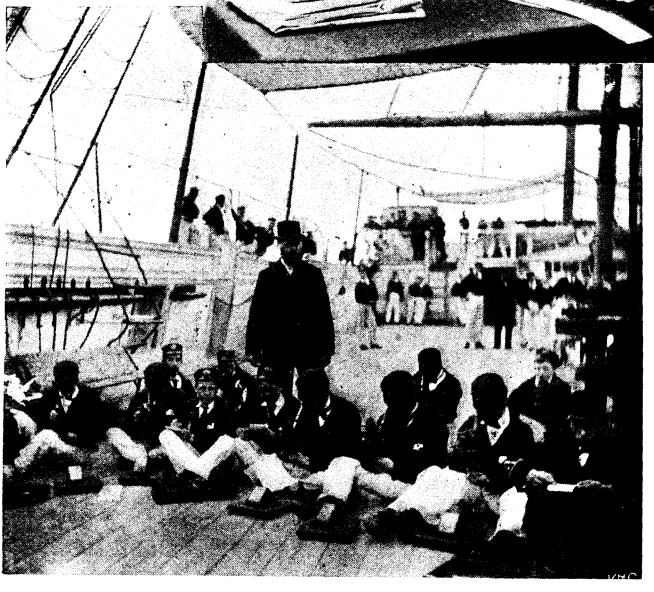
The ship can accommodate 155 boys. The general school curriculum is identical with that of the great public schools; but, in addition, the cadets have to study all the various branches of seamanship, navigation, and science appertaining to their particular profession, the chief aim being to produce officers who shall, above all things, be expert seamen, whether their ultimate destination be the Royal Navy or the merchant service.

When a sailor inspects the *Worcester*, he is filled with admiration for the excellence and up-to-dateness of everything, down to the smallest detail. A landsman, however, finds himself suddenly steeped in all the romance of the sea, with none of its inconveniences. He walks about the old battleship and notes its strange contrasts: ancient oak decks that are heated throughout with hot water pipes in cold weather; the "wooden walls" likewise possess as fine an electric plant as one could wish, while the former powder magazine displays, in orderly array, 155 outfits of oilskins and sea boots. To a landsman there is also a great fascination in watching the boys go "aloft," more especially as there is no danger of their falling overboard (the *Worcester* is anchored so securely that it is warranted not to rock), and, should they experiment a fall on deck, a strong net is always stretched with open arms ready to receive the erring ones. I remember on one occasion being aloft with some of the lads, when we dared a fellow cadet to dive



CUTLASS DRILL.

THE PETTY OFFICERS' ROOM.



LEARNING TO USE THE SEXTANT.

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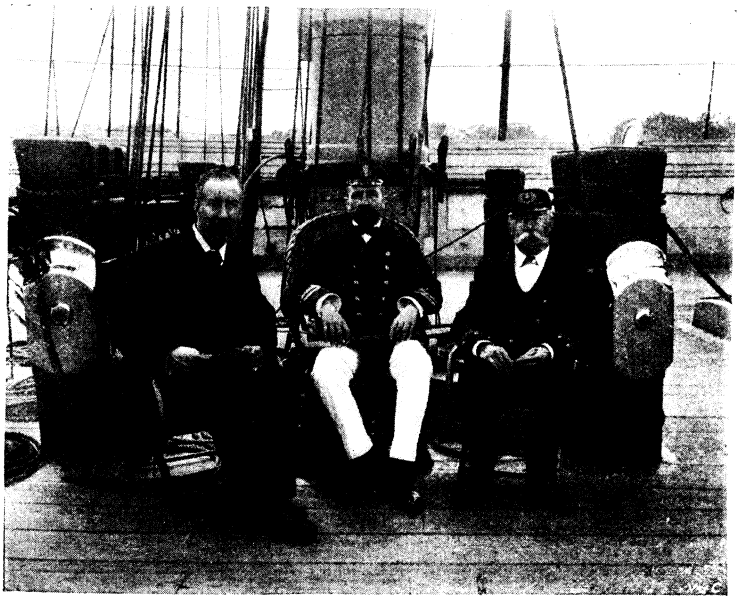
into the net. Nothing loth, he dived, and landed safely at the required destination. When the officers rushed to his assistance he very meekly expressed his sorrow for having so unexpectedly "turned giddy." As time went on, however, it was noticed by those in authority that this lad "turned giddy" regularly at the same place, and, with equal regularity, it necessitated his diving into the net, to our admiration. But the captain did not consult the doctor for this complaint. He first tried a simple remedy, and merely ordered the boy a complete rest from everything in the way of recreation on the next half-holiday, giving him a quiet time to himself in the schoolroom instead. It is surprising what a wonderful restorative that proves to a boy. Next day the giddiness was completely cured.

The cadets have to learn to "stow" their hammocks in the morning and hang them again at night. But a far more important matter to the novice is the fact that he has to learn how to get into the said hammock when it is time to turn in. I have no doubt that in the present day all the other boys kindly rush forward at once, and, as a matter of course, show the "new fellow" how the oracle works. But they didn't do that in my day. They used to watch with brutal glee while a poor nervous unfortunate stood wondering whether he should get in with his head first or his feet. But when once he was fairly in, his troubles were not necessarily over. Some well-wisher had possibly been "stringing" his hammock for him—*i.e.*, had suspended it from its hook by a frail piece of string. Under such circumstances a hurtful thud would be inevitably the next item in the programme of the evening's entertainment. But this happened a few years ago. I feel convinced that present-day cadets are quite innocent of such acts of iniquity.

IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.



THE POWERS THAT BE.

Mr. Buck,	Captain Wilson-Barker,	Mr. Clarke,
Head Master.	*Captain-Superintendent.*	*Chief Officer.*

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JOAN OF THE SWORD.

By S. R. Crockett.*

Illustrated by Frank Richards.

SYNOPSIS OF FOREGOING CHAPTERS.

In the preceding chapters we are introduced to the Duchess Joan of Hohenstein, in Castle Kernsberg, one of her eight strong castles in the small State over which she rules. Joan, who is twenty-one years old, is a keen and accomplished swordswoman. She is bound by the decree of her father, anxious to unite the two States, either to marry Prince Louis of Courtland or to forfeit her dominion. An ambassador arrives from the neighbouring State of Plassenburg named Leopold von Dessauer; and on learning that he is visiting Courtland on leaving Kernsberg, Joan determines to accompany him disguised as his secretary, in order that she may see the Prince unknown to him. They arrive at Courtland during a grand tournament. "Johann Pyrmont," as the secretary is called, is much interested in one particular knight who wins the prize for bravery. Johann hears him spoken of as "the Prince," and is glad to have met him so soon. Next day the secretary makes the acquaintance of Princess Margaret of Courtland (sister to the Prince), who is greatly fascinated by the young man's looks and ingenuousness. She promptly discards her former cavalier, a Muscovite Prince, who is mad with jealousy. Johann, however, is much confused at the double *rôle* that is necessary in order to preserve the secret of his identity, and this is increased at a business interview he has with the Prince on behalf of the ambassador, who is ill. Finally the Princess insists that the secretary shall accompany her around the garden, and tell her more about himself and his country.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ROSE GARDEN.

THE rose garden of the summer palace of Courtland was a paradise made for lovers' whisperings. Even now, when the chill of autumn had begun to blow through its bowers, it was over-clambered with late-blooming flowers. Its bowers were creeper-tangled. Trees met over paths bedded with fallen petals, a shade in sunshine, a shelter in rain, delightful in both.

It was natural that so fair a Princess, taking such a sudden fancy to a young man, should find her way where the shade was deepest and the labyrinth most entangled.

But this secretary Johann of ours, being creditably hard of heart, would far rather have hied him back to old Dessauer with his news. More than anything he desired to be alone, that he might think over the events of the morning.

But the Princess Margaret had quite other intentions.

"Do you know," she began, "that I might well have lodged you in a dungeon cell for that which in another had been dire insolence?"

They were pacing a long, dusky avenue of tall yew trees. The secretary turned towards her the blank look of one whose thoughts have been far away. But the Princess rattled on, heedless of his mood.

"Nevertheless, I forgive you," she said; "after all, I myself asked you to teach me your foreign customs. If anyone be to blame, it is I. But one thing I would impress upon you, sir secretary: do not practise these outland peculiarities before my brothers. Either of them might look with prejudice upon such customs being observed generally throughout the city. I came back chiefly to warn you. We do not want that handsome head of yours (which I admit is well enough in its way, as, being a man, you are doubtless aware) taken off and stuck on a pole over the Strasburg Gate!"

It was with an effort that the secretary detached himself sufficiently from his reveries upon the interview in the summer palace to understand what the Princess was driving at.

"All this mighty pother, all because I kissed her on the cheek," he thought. "A Princess of Courtland is no such mighty thing—and why should I not?—Oh, of course, I had forgotten again. I am not now the person I was."

But what need to tell with what infinite condescension the Princess took the young man's hand and read his fortune, dwelling frowningly on the lines of love and life?

"You have too pretty a hand for a man," she said; "why is it hard here and here?"

"That is from the sword grip," said the secretary, with no small pride.

"Do you, then, fence well? I wish I could see you," she cried, clapping her hands. "How splendid it would be to see a bout between you and Prince Wasp—that is, the Prince Ivan of Muscovy, I mean. He is a great fencer, and also desires to be a great friend of mine. He would give something to be sitting here teaching me how they take hands and bid each other good-bye in Bearland. They rub noses, I have heard say, a

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"'So, young springald, you think to court a foolish princess.'"

custom which, to my thinking, would be more provocative than satisfactory. I like your Plassenburg fashion better."

Whereat there was nothing for it but that the secretary should arouse himself out of his reverie and do his part. If the Princess of Courtland chose to amuse herself with him, well, it was harmless on either side—even more so than she knew. Soon he would be far away. Meanwhile he must not comport himself like a puking fool.

"I think in somewise it were possible to improve upon the customs even of Plassenburg," said the Princess Margaret, after certain experiments; "but tell me, since you say that we are to be friends, and I have admitted your plea, what is your fortune? Nay, do you know that I do not even know your name—at least, not from your own lips."

For, headlong as she had proved herself in making love according to her limited extent, yet a vein of Baltic practicality was hidden beneath her impetuosity.

"My father was the Count von Löen, and I am his heir!" said the secretary carefully;

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"but I do not usually call myself so. There are reasons why I should not."

Which there were, indeed—grave reasons, too.

"Then you are the Count von Löen?" said the Princess. "I seem to have heard that name somewhere. Tell me, are you the Count von Löen?"

"I am certainly the heir to that title," said the secretary, grilling within and wishing himself a thousand miles away.

"I must go directly and tell my brother. He will be back from the cathedral by this time. I am sure he did not know. And the estates—a little involved, doubtless, like those of most well-born folk in these days? Are they in your sole right?"

"The estates are extensive. They are not encumbered so far as I know. They are all in my own right," explained the newly styled Count with perfect truth. But within him he was saying, "God help me! I get deeper and deeper. What a whirling chaos a single lie leads one into! Heaven give me speedy succour out of this!" And as he thought of his troubles, the noble count, the swordsman, the learned secretary, could scarce restrain a desire to break into hysterical sobbing.

A new thought seemed to strike the Princess as he was speaking.

"But so young, so handsome," she murmured, "so apt a pupil at love!" Then aloud she said, "You are not deceiving me? You are not already betrothed?"

"Not to any woman!" said the deceitful Count, picking his words with exactness.

The gay laugh of the Princess rang out prompt as an echo.

"I did not expect you to be engaged to a man!" she cried. "But now conduct me to the entrance of my chambers" (here she reached him her hand). "I like you," she added frankly, looking at him with unflinching eyes. "I am of the house of Courtland, and we are accustomed to say what we think—the women especially. And before I carry out their wretched contract and marry the Prince Wasp, I will do even as I said to my brother, I will run away and wed a dog-whipper! But perhaps I may do better than either!" she said in her heart, nodding determinedly as she looked at the handsome youth before her, who now stood with his downcast eyes upon the ground.

They were almost out of the yew tree walk, and the voice of the Princess carried far, like that of most very impulsive persons. It reached the ears of a gay young fashionable, who had just dismounted at the gate which led from the rose garden into the wing of the palace inhabited by the Princess Margaret and her suite.

"Now," said the Princess, "I will show you how apt a pupil I make. Tell me whether this is according to the best traditions of Plassenburg!" And taking his face between her hands she kissed him rapidly upon either cheek and then upon the lips.

"There!" she said, "I wonder what my noble brothers would say to that! I will show them that Margaret of Courtland can choose both whom she will kiss and whom she will marry!"

And flashing away from him like a strong-winged bird she fled upward into her chambers. Then, somewhat dazed by the rapid succession of emotions, Johann the secretary stepped out of the green glooms of the yew tree walk into the broad glare of the September sun and found himself face to face with Prince Wasp.

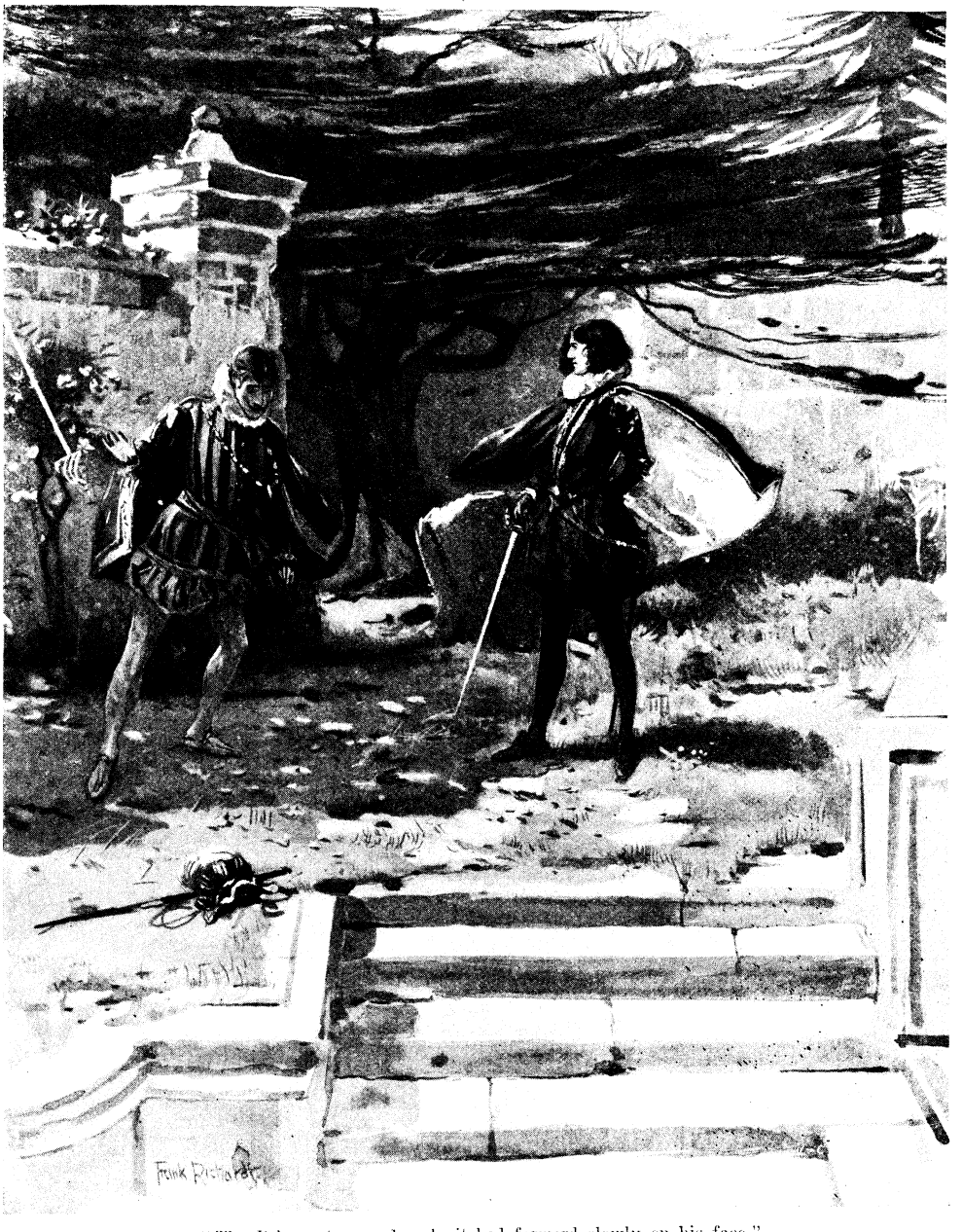
CHAPTER X.

PRINCE WASP.

Now Ivan, Prince of Muscovy, had business in Courtland very clear and distinct. He came to woo the Princess Margaret, which being done, he wished to be gone. There was on his side the certainty of an excellent fortune, a possible succession, and, in any case, a pretty and wilful wife. But as he thought on that last the Wasp smiled to himself. In Moscow there were ways, once he had her there, of taming the most wilful of wives.

As to the inheritance—well, it was true there were two lives between; but one of these, in Prince Ivan's mind, was as good as nought, and the other——. In addition, the marriage had been arranged by their several fathers, though not under the same penalty as that of the Prince of Courtland and Joan Duchess of Hohenstein.

Prince Wasp had not favourably impressed the family at the palace. His manners had the strident edge and blatant self-assertion of one who, unlicensed at home, has been flattered abroad, deferred to everywhere, and accustomed to his own way in all things. Nevertheless, Ivan had managed to make himself popular with the townsfolk, on account of the largess which he lavished and the custom which his numerous suite brought



"The Prince staggered and pitched forward slowly on his face."

to the town. Specially, he had been successful in attaching the rabble of the place to his cause; and already he had headed off two other wooers who had come from the south to solicit the smiles of the Princess Margaret.

"So," he said, as he faced the secretary, now somewhat compositely styled, Johann, Count von Löen, "so, young springald, you think to court a foolish princess. You play upon her with your pretty words and graceful compliments. That is an agreeable relaxation. It passes the time better than fumbling with papers in front of an escritoire. Only—you have in addition to reckon with me, Ivan, hereditary Prince of Muscovy."

And with a sweep of his hand across his body he drew his sword from its sheath.

The sword of the young secretary came

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into his hand with equal swiftness. But he answered nothing. A curious feeling of detachment crept over him. He had held the bare sword before in presence of an enemy, but never till now unsupported.

"I do you the honour to suppose you noble," said Prince Wasp, "otherwise I should have you flogged by my lacqueys and thrown into the town ditch. I have informed you of my name and pretensions to the hand of the Princess Margaret, whom you have insulted. I pray you give me yours in return."

"I am called Johann, Count von Löen," answered the secretary as curtly as possible.

"Pardon the doubt which is in my mind," said the Prince of Muscovy, with a black, sneering bitterness characteristic of him, "but though I am well versed in all the noble families of the north, and especially in those of Plassenburg, where I resided a full year in the late Prince's time, I am not acquainted with any such title."

"Nevertheless, it is mine by right and by birthright," retorted the secretary, "as I am well prepared to maintain with my sword in the meantime. And, after, you can assure yourself from the mouth of High States Councillor Dessauer that the name and style are mine. Your ignorance, however, need not defer your chastisement."

"Follow me, Count von Löen," said the Prince, "I am too anxious to deal with your insolence as it deserves to quarrel as to names or titles, legal or illegitimate. My quarrel is with your fascinating body and prettyish face, the beauty of which I will presently improve with some good Northland steel."

And with his lithe and springy walk the Prince of Muscovy passed again into the alleys of the rose garden till he reached the first open space, where he turned upon the secretary.

"We are arrived," he said; "our business is so pressing, and will be so quickly finished, that there is no need for the formality of seconds. Though I honour you by crossing my sword with yours, it is a mere formality. I have such skill of the weapon, as I daresay report has told you, that you may consider yourself dead already. I look upon your chastisement no more seriously than I might the killing of a fly that has vexed me with its buzzing. Guard!"

But Johann Pyrmont had been trained in a school which permitted no such windy preludes, and with the fencer's smile on his face he kept his silence. His sword would answer all such boastings, and that in good time.

And so it fell out.

From the very first crossing of the swords Prince Wasp found himself opposed by a quicker eye, a firmer wrist, a method and science infinitely superior to his own. His most dashing attack was repelled with apparent ease, yet with a subtlety which interposed nothing but the most delicate of guards and parries between Prince Ivan and victory. This gradually infuriated the Prince, till suddenly losing his temper he stamped his foot in anger and rushed upon his foe with the true Muscovite fire.

Then, indeed, had Johann need of all his constant practice with the sword, for the sting of the Wasp flashed to kill as he struck straight at the heart of his foe.

But lo! the blade was turned aside, the long-delayed answering thrust glittered out, and the secretary's sword stood a couple of handbreadths in the boaster's shoulder.

With an effort Johann recovered his blade and stood ready for the ripost; but the wound was more than enough. The Prince staggered, cried out some unintelligible words in the Muscovite language, and pitched forward slowly on his face among the trampled leaves and blown rose petals of the palace garden.

The secretary grew paler than his wont, and ran to lift his fallen enemy. But, all unseen, other eyes had watched the combat, and from the door by which they had entered, and from behind the trees of the surrounding glade, there came the noise of pounding footsteps and fierce cries of "Seize him! Kill him! Tear him to pieces! He has slain the good Prince, the friend of the people! The Prince Ivan is dead!"

And ere the secretary could touch the body of his unconscious foe, or assure himself concerning his wound, he found himself surrounded by a yelling crowd of city loafers and gallow-rats, many of them rag-clad, others habited in heterogeneous scraps of cast-off clothing, or articles snatched from clothes-lines and bleaching greens, and long-mourned, doubtless, by the good wives of Courtland.

The secretary eyed this unkempt horde with haughty scorn, and his fearless attitude, as he striped his stained sword through his handkerchief and threw the linen away, had something to do with the fact that the rabble halted at the distance of half-a-dozen yards and for many minutes contented themselves with hurling oaths and imprecations at him. Johann Pyrmont kept his sword in his hand

"It was the Danish prisoner, that same Sparhawk who had fought with Werner von Orseln."

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and stood by the body of his fallen foe in disdainful silence till the arrival of fresh contingents through the gate aroused the spirit of the crowd. Knives and sword-blades began to gleam here and there in grimy hands where at first there had been only staves and chance-snatched gauds of iron.

"At him! Down with him! He can only strike once!" These and similar cries in-

"'I am so glad you stung the Wasp. I love you for it!' she said."

spirited the rabble of Courtland, great haters of the Plassenburg and the Teutonic west, to rush in and make an end.

At last they did come on, not all together, but in irregular, undisciplined rushes. Johann's sword streaked out this way and that. There was an answering cry of pain, a turmoil among the assailants as a wounded man whirled his way backward out of the press. But this could not last for long. The odds were too great. The droning roar of hate from the edges of the crowd grew louder as new and ever newer accretions joined themselves to its changing fringes.

Then suddenly came a voice. "Back, on your lives, dogs and traitors! Germans to the rescue! Danes, Teuts, Northmen to the rescue!"

Following the direction of the sound, Johann saw a young man drive through the press, his sword bare in his hand, his eyes glittering with excitement. It was the Danish prisoner of the guard-hall at Kernsberg, that same Sparhawk who had fought with Werner von Orseln.

The crowd stared back and forth betwixt him and that other whom he came to succour. Far more than ever his extraordinary likeness to the secretary appeared. Apparent enough at any time, it was accentuated now by similarity of clothing. For, like Johann Pyrmont, the Sparhawk was attired in a black doublet and trunk hose of scholastic cut, and as they stood back to back, little difference could be noted, save that the new-comer was a trifle the taller.

"Saint Michael and the holy angels!" cried the leader of the crowd, "can it be that there are scores of these Plassenburg black crows in Courtland, slaying whom they will? Here be two of them as like as two peas, or a couple of earthen pipkins from the same potter's wheel!"

The Dane flung a word over his shoulder to his companion.

"Pardon me, your grace," said the Sparhawk, "if I stand back to back with you. They are dangerous. We must watch well for any chance of escape."

The secretary did not answer to this strange style of address, but placed himself back to back with his ally, and their two bright blades waved every way. Only that of Johann Pyrmont was already reddened well-nigh half its length.

A second time the courage of the crowd worked itself up, and they came on.

"Death to the Russ, to the lovers of Russians!" cried the Sparhawk, and his blade dealt thrusts every way. But the pressure increased every moment. Those behind cried, "Kill them!" For they were out of reach of those two shining streaks of steel. Those before would have gladly fallen behind, but could not for the forward thrust of their friends. Still the ring narrowed, and the pair of gallant fighters would doubtlessly have been swept away had not a diversion come to alter the face of things.

Out of the gate which led to the wing of

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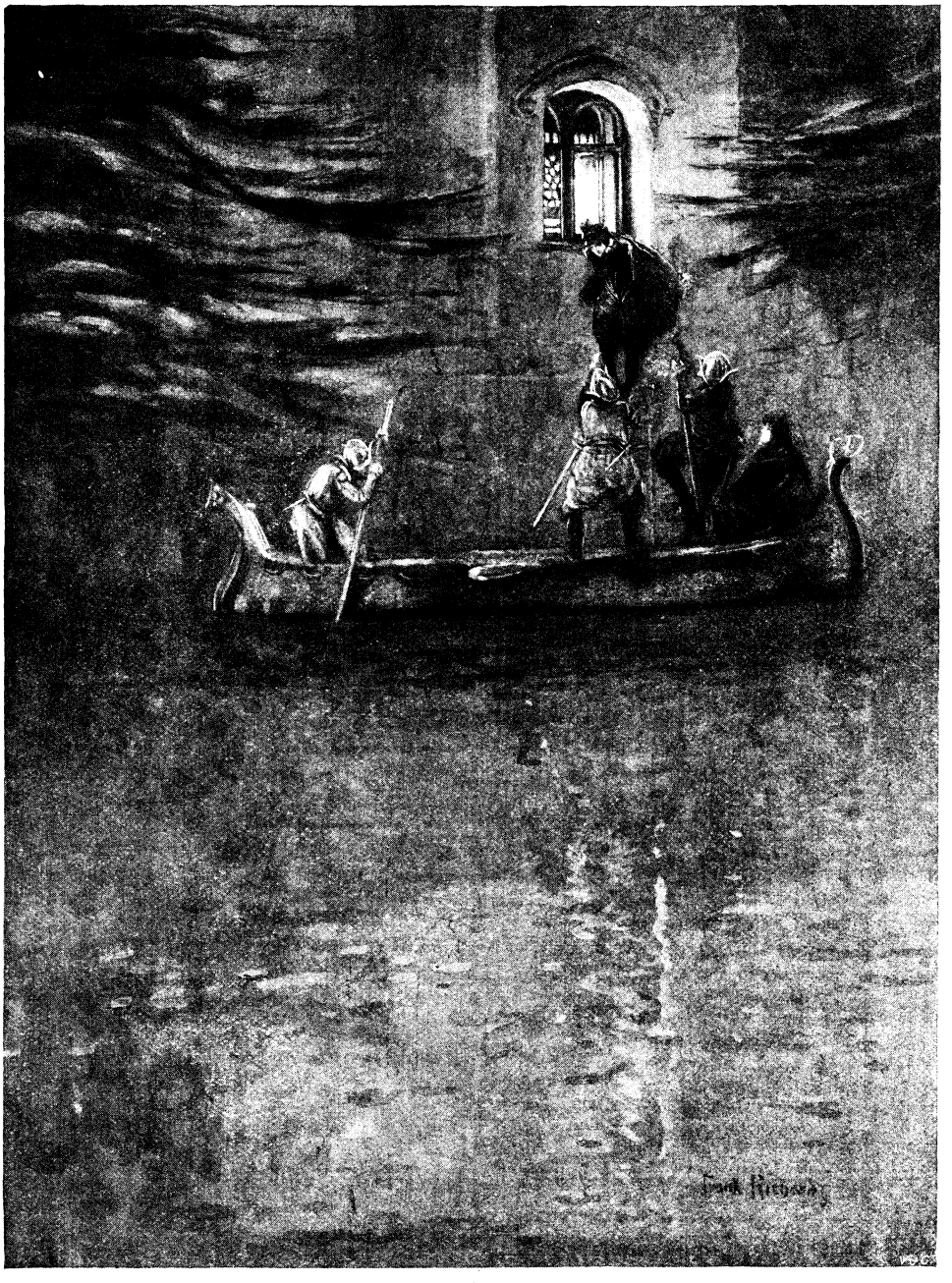

"The secretary found himself swaying over the dark water."

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the palace occupied by the Princess Margaret burst a little company of halberdiers, at sight of whom the crowd gave suddenly back. The Princess herself was with them.

"Take all prisoners, and bring them within," she cried. "My brother is from home, or you dare not thus brawl in the very precincts of the palace!"

And at her words the soldiers advanced rapidly. A further diversion was caused by the Sparhawk suddenly cleaving a way through the crowd and setting off at full speed in the direction of the river. Whereupon the rabble, glad to combine personal safety with the pleasures of the chase, took to their heels after him. But, light and unexpected in motion as his namesake, the Sparhawk skimmed down the alleys, darted sideways through gates which he shut behind him with a clash of iron, and finally plunged into the green rush of the river, swimming safe and unhurt to the further shore, whither, in the absence of boats at this particular spot, none could pursue him.

CHAPTER XI.

THE KISS OF THE PRINCESS MARGARET.

THE Princess and her guard were left with only the secretary and the unconscious body of the Prince of Muscovy.

"Sirrah," she cried severely to the former, "is this the first use you make of our hospitality, thus to brawl in the street underneath my very windows with our noble guest the Prince Ivan? Take him to my brother's room, and keep him safely there to await our lord's return. We shall see what the Prince will say to this. And as for this wounded man, take him to his own apartments, and let a surgeon be sent to him. Only not in too great a hurry," she added as an afterthought to the commander of her little company of palace guards.

So, merely detailing half a dozen to carry the Prince to his chambers, the captain of the guard conducted the secretary to the very room in which an hour before he had met the brother of the Princess. Here he was confined, with a couple of guards at the door. Nor had he been long shut up before he heard the quick step of the Princess coming along the passage-way. He could distinguish it a long way off, for the summer palace was built mostly of wood, and every sound was clearly audible.

"So," she said, as soon as the door was shut, "you have killed Prince Wasp!"

"I trust not," said the secretary gravely; "I meant only to wound him. But as he attacked me I could not do otherwise than defend myself."

"Tut," cried the Princess, "I hope you have killed him. It will be good riddance, and most like the Muscovites will send an army—which, with your Plassenburg to help us, will make a pretty fight. It serves him right, at all events, for Prince Wasp must always be thrusting his sting into honest folk. He will be none the worse for some of his own poison applied at a rapier's point to keep him quiet for some few days."

But Johann was not in a mood to relish the jubilation of the Princess. He grew markedly uneasy in his mind. Every moment he anticipated that the Prince would return. A trial would take place, and he did not know what might not be discovered.

The Princess Margaret delivered him from his anxiety.

"The laws are strict against duelling," she continued. "The Prince Ivan is in high favour with my elder brother, and it will be well that you are seen no more in Courtland—for the present, that is. But in a little the Prince Wasp will die or he will recover. In either case the affair will blow over. Then you will come back to teach me more foreign customs."

She smiled and held out her hand. Johann kissed it, perhaps without the fervour which might have been expected from a brisk young man thus highly favoured by the fairest and sprightliest of princesses.

"To-night," she went on, "there will be a boat beneath that window. It will be manned by those whom I can trust. A ladder of rope will be thrown to your casement. By it you will descend, and with a good horse and a sufficient escort you can ride either to Plassenburg—or to Kernsberg, which is nearer, and tell Joan of the Sword Hand that her sister the Princess Margaret sends you to her. I will give you a letter to the minx, though I am sure I shall not like her. She is so forward, they say. But be ready at the hour of midnight. Who was that youth who fled as we came up?"

"A Danish knight who came hither in our train from Kernsberg," replied Johann. "But for him I should have been lost indeed!"

"I must have a horse also for him!" cried the Princess. "He will surely watch and join you, knowing that his danger is as great as yours. Hearken—they are mourning for

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their precious Prince Wasp. To-morrow they will howl louder if by good hap he goes home to—purgatory!"

And through the open windows came a sound of distant shoutings as they carried the wounded Prince to his lodging.

"Now," said the Princess, "for the present fare you well—in the colder fashion of Courtland this time, for the sake of the guards at the door. But remember that you are more than ever plighted to me to be my instructor, Count von Löen!"

She went to the door, and with her fingers on the handle she turned her about with a pretty, vixenish expression. "I am so glad you stung the Wasp. I love you for it!" she said.

But after she had vanished with these words the secretary grew more and more downcast in spirit. Even this naïve declaration of affection failed to cheer him. He sat down and gave himself up to the most melancholy anticipations.

At six a servitor silently entered with a well-chosen and beautifully cooked meal, of which the secretary partook sparingly. At seven it grew dark, and at ten all was quiet in the city. The river rushed swiftly beneath, and the noise of it, as the water lapped against the stone foundations of the summer palace, helped to disguise the noise of oars, as the boat, a dark shadow upon greyish water, detached itself from the opposite shore and approached the window from whose open casement Johann Pyrmont looked out.

A low whistle came from underneath, and presently followed the soft, reeving *whisk* of a coil of rope as it passed through the window and fell at his feet. The secretary looked about for something to fasten it to, and finally decided upon the iron uprights of the great desk at which the Prince had stood earlier in the day.

No sooner was this done than Johann set his foot on the top round and began to descend. It was with a sudden emptiness at the pit of the stomach and a great desire to cry out for someone to hold the ladder steady that the secretary found himself swaying over the dark water. The boat seemed very far away, a mere spot of blackness upon the river face.

But presently, and while making up his mind to practise the gymnastic of rope ladders quietly at home, he made out a man holding the ladder, while two others with grappled boat-hooks kept the boat steady fore and aft.

A shrouded figure sat in the stern. The secretary seemed rather to find himself in a boat which rose swiftly to meet him than to descend into it. He was handed from one to the other of the rowers till he reached the shrouded figure in the stern, out of the folds of whose enveloping cloak a small, warm hand shot forth and pulled him down upon the seat.

"Draw this about you, Count," a low voice whispered; and in another moment Johann found himself under the shelter of one cloak with that daring slip of nobility, the Princess Margaret of Courtland.

"I was obliged to come; there is no danger. These fellows are of my household and devoted to me. I did not dare to risk anything going wrong. Besides, I am a princess, and—why need not I say it?—I wanted to come. I wanted to see you again, though, indeed, there is small chance of that in such a night. And 'tis as well, for I am sure my hair is every way about my face."

"The horses are over there," she added after a pause; "we are almost at the shore now—alas, too soon! But I must not keep you. I want you to come back the sooner. And remember, if Prince Wasp gets better and worries me too much, or my brother is unkind and insists upon marrying me to the Bear, I will take one or two of these fellows and come to seek you at Plassenburg, so make your reckoning with that, Count von Löen. As I said, what is the use of being a princess if you cannot marry whom you will? Most, I know, marry whom they are told; but then they have not the spirit of a Baltic weevil, let alone that of Margaret of Courtland."

They touched the shore almost at the place where the Sparhawk had landed in the morning when he escaped from the city rabble, and a stone's-throw further up the bank they found the horses waiting, ready caparisoned for the journey.

Two men were, by the Princess's orders, to accompany Johann.

But with great thoughtfulness she had provided a fourth horse for the companion who, equally with himself, was under the ban of the law for wounding the lieges of the Prince of Courtland within the precincts of the palace.

"He cannot have gone far," said the Princess. "He would certainly conceal himself till nightfall in the first convenient hiding-place. He will be on the look-out for any chance to release you.'

And the event proved the wisdom of her prophecy. For so soon as he had distinguished the slim figure of the secretary

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"She threw her arms impulsively about the Sparhawk's neck."

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landing from the boat the Sparhawk appeared on the crest of the hill, though for the moment he was still unseen by those below.

"Good-bye! For the present, good-bye, dear Princess," said Johann, with his heart in his voice. "God knows, I can never thank or repay you. My heart is heavy for that. I am unworthy of all your goodness. It is not as you think——"

He paused for words which might warn without revealing his secret; but the Princess, never long silent, struck in.

"Let there be no talk of parting except for the moment," she said. "Go, you are my knight. Perhaps one day, if you do not forget me, I may be yet far kinder to you!"

And with a kiss and a little sob the Princess sent her lover, more and more downcast and discouraged by reason of her kindness, upon his way. So much did his obvious depression affect Margaret of Courtland, that after the secretary, with one of the men-at-arms leading the spare horse, had reached the top of the river bank, she suddenly bade the rowers wait a moment before casting loose from the land.

"Your sword! Your sword!" she called aloud, risking any listener in her eagerness; "you have forgotten your sword."

Now it chanced that the Sparhawk had come up with the little party of travellers. He kissed the hand of Johann Pyrmont, placed him on his beast, and was preparing to mount his steed with a glad heart, when the voice from beneath startled him.

"Do not trouble, I will bring the sword," said the Sparhawk to Johann, with his usual impetuosity, putting the reins into the secretary's hands, and without a moment's hesitation he flung himself down the bank. The Princess had leaped nimbly ashore, and was standing with the sheathed sword in her hand.

When she saw the figure come bounding towards her down the pebbly bank, she gave a little cry, and, dropping the scabbard, she threw her arms impulsively about the Sparhawk's neck.

"I could not let you go like that—without ever telling you that I loved you—really, I mean," she whispered, while the youth stood petrified with astonishment, without sound or motion. "I will marry none but you—neither Prince Ivan nor another. A woman should not tell a man that, lest he despise her; but a princess may, because the man dare not tell her."

* * * * *

"And what said you?" asked the secretary of his companion, as they rode together through the night out on their road to Kernsberg.

"Why, I said nothing—speech was not needed," quoth the Dane coolly.

"She kissed you?"

"Well," said the Sparhawk, "I could not help that!"

"But what said you to that?"

"Why, of course, I kissed her back again, as a man ought!" he made answer.

"Poor Princess," mused the secretary; "it is more than I could ever have done for her!" Aloud he said, "But you do not love her—you had not seen her before! What did you kiss her for?"

For these things are hidden from women.

The Dane shrugged his shoulders in the dark.

"Well, I take what the gods send," he replied. "She was a pretty girl, and her Princess-ship made no difference in her kissing so far as I could see. I serve you to the death, my Lady Duchess; but if a princess loves me by the way, why, I am ready to indulge her to the limit of her desires!"

"You are an accommodating youth," sighed the secretary, and forthwith returned to his own melancholy thoughts.

And as they rode westward they heard all around them the rustle of corn in the night wind. Stacks of hay shed a sweet scent momently across their path, and more than once fruit-laden branches swept across their faces. For they were passing through the garden of the Baltic, and its fresh beauty was never fresher than on that September night when these four rode out of Courtland towards the distant blue hills on which was perched Kernsberg, built like an eagle's nest on a crag overfrowning the wealthy plain.

At the first boundaries of the group of little hill principalities the two soldiers were dismissed, suitably rewarded by Johann, to carry the news of safety back to their wayward and impulsive mistress. And thenceforward the Sparhawk and the secretary rode on alone.

At the little châlet among the hills where the Duchess Joan had so suddenly disappeared they found two of her tire-maidens and her aged nurse impatiently awaiting their mistress. To them entered that composite and puzzling youth the ex-architect and secretary of the embassy of Plassenburg, Johann, Count von Löen. And, wonder of wonders, in an hour Joan of the Sword Hand was riding eagerly

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towards her capital city with her due retinue, as if she had been only taking a little summer breathing space at a country seat.

Her entrance created as little surprise as her exit. For as to her exits and entrances alike the Duchess consulted no man, much less any woman. Werner von Orseln saluted as impassively as if he had seen his mistress an hour before, and the acclamations of the guard rang out as cheerfully as ever.

Joan felt her spirits rise to be once more in her own land and among her own folk. Nevertheless, there was a new feeling in her heart as she thought of the day of her marriage, when the long-planned bond of brotherhood-heritage should at last be carried out, and she should indeed become the mistress of that great land into which she had adventured so strangely, and the bride of the Prince—her Prince, the most noble man on whom her eyes had ever rested.

Then her thoughts flew to the Princess who had delivered her out of peril so deadly, and her soul grew sick and sad within her, not at all lest her adventure should be known. She cared not so much about that. (Perhaps some day she would even tell him herself when—well, *after !*)

But since she had ridden to Courtland, Joan, all untouched before, had grown suddenly tender to the smarting of another woman's heart.

"It was in no wise my fault," she told herself, which in a sense was true.

But conscience, being a thing not subject to reason, dealt not a whit the more easily with her on that account.

It was six months afterwards that the Sparhawk, who had been given the command of a troop of good Hohenstein lancers, asked permission to go on a journey.

He had been palpably restless and uneasy ever since his return, and, in spite of immediate favour and the prospect of yet further promotion, he could not settle to his work.

"Whither would you go ?" asked his mistress.

"To Courtland," he confessed, somewhat reluctantly, looking down at the peaked toe of his tanned leather riding-boot.

"And what takes you to Courtland ?" said Joan ; "you are in danger there. Besides, would you leave my service and engage with some other ?"

"Nay, my lady," he burst out, "that will not I, so long as life lasts ! But—but the truth is"—he hesitated as he spoke—"I cannot get out of my mind the Princess who kissed me in the dark. The like never happened before to any man. I cannot forget her, do what I will. No, nor rest till I have looked upon her face."

"Wait," said Joan. "Only wait till the spring and it is my hap to ride to Courtland for my marriage day. Then I promise you you shall see somewhat of her—the Lord send it be not more than enough !"

So through many bitter days the Sparhawk abode at the castle of Kernsberg, ill content.

(*To be continued.*)

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DEACON JONES: I haven't missed going to church one Sunday in twenty years.

REGULAR ABSENTEE (with ready sympathy): Yes; I guess it's like whisky and tobacco—hard to stop it.

"HAVE I ever been in a big wind? Waal, stranger, I guess I have. Why, I was once taking a walk with my pup, when it was blowing a trifle considerable, and he happened to yawn. Next moment I found he was blown completely inside out!"

HER FRIEND: Doesn't your husband object to that pug dog?

SHE: Not at all. He hates the dog, but he doesn't dare to object.

MAMMA: Freddy's teacher is so pretty! I believe half the boys in her class are determined to marry her when they grow up.

PAPA: But I trust she has other prospects.

HER FATHER: So you want to marry my daughter? Do you think you have the patience and forbearance to make her a kind and indulgent husband?

WOULD-BE SON-IN-LAW: I don't know, sir, but I can button a standing collar on a shirt that is a half-size larger without getting angry, and I——

HER FATHER: Say no more, say no more, but take her, my son, and my blessing goes with her.

REGGIE (who stutters): P-P-Perhaps you have not noticed it, Miss Maggie, but I l-l-l—I—er—l-l-l——

MAGGIE (trembling violently): O Reggie!—er—this is so sudden, you know!

REGGIE: I l-l-left my umbrella here two weeks ago, and should like to recover it!

CITIZEN (to farmer): How are things out your way, Mr. Hayseed?

MR. HAYSEED (gloomily): They couldn't be much wuss. My wife and three cows are down with pleuro-pneumonia. And to think that I refused twenty pound apiece for 'em only last week!

"THERE is one important thing to be said in favour of tight boots," remarked the shopman, when he discovered that he had no larger size in stock. "They make a man forget all his other sorrows."

THE FINAL PERSEVERANCE OF A SAINT.

By Sam Walter Foss.

He made a tract to mend the world,
And when his work was ended,
Nobody read his tract, and so
The world remained unmended.

He made a play to elevate
The stage, with hope elated;
But, as the stage refused his play,
It stayed unelevated.

He made a song to lift the world,
A glorious song and gifted;
But as nobody sang his song,
The world remained unlifted.

He made a joke to tickle men,
With wit's sharp acid pickled;
And everybody read the joke,
And everyone was tickled.

"Go 'way from there," shouted a woman at the kitchen window.

Meandering Mike was halfway over the fence, but had paused to parley with the dog that snapped his jaws and growled and jumped at him from the other side.

"Did you say 'Go 'way from here'?" he inquired.

"Yes, and I mean just that."

"Madam, the invitation is wholly superfluous. I was goin' anyhow. I kin size up a situation as quick as anybody, an' I ain't gointer t'row meself on the hospitalities of no fam'ly what don't feed their dog no better'n you do."

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MY NIECE ANGELICA AGAIN.

By Dorothy Gurney.

I HAVE just imparted the important news to Angelica, and I breathe again! I had an anxious moment, for I was not at all sure what views of her own she might have for me; but the thing had got to be done, and I did it with the best grace I could.

I called Angelica into my bedroom. The bed, tables, and chairs were strewn with flounces and furbelows. I know Angelica's feminine weakness—the only weak thing about her—for clothes, and I count on the impression the beauty of the garments thus displayed will have upon her infant mind.

"Darling, how perfectly lovely!" she exclaims, in a tone of mingled patronage and ecstasy; "are they all yours? How dreadfully 'stravagant!"

Her charming face takes on its most early Victorian air, and she looks in a slightly Pharisaical manner at her own plain red serge dress and clean muslin pinafore.

"It does look extravagant, I know, Angelica," I hasten to explain; "but, you see, one doesn't get married every day."

"Married! Oh! my dear, darling, sweet Kitty, are you going to get married? You'll have me for a bridesmaid, won't you? and"—this is an evident afterthought—"Agnes, too? I don't see what Jack's to be, unless he holds up your train. You'll have a train, of course, Kitty?"

I had had visions of a lovely ivory cloth walking dress, trimmed with old lace and sable, but the finality in Angelica's voice leaves me no hope.

"Of course," I say faintly.

"And orange blossoms and a veil, and a bouquet, and all proper?"

"I suppose so."

"You wouldn't be really married, you see," explains Angelica kindly, "unless you had."

"Don't you want to know who I am going to marry?" I hazard the suggestion.

"I suppose it's Maurice." Angelica's interest is flatter in the prospective husband than in the bridal garments; it is evidently a mere matter of politeness.

"No, it isn't Maurice; it's Ted."

"Ted!" The name becomes a shriek of surprise. "Dear, darling Ted! why you don't like Ted half as much as Maurice; and, besides, I meant to marry him myself. But perhaps he *was* a little old for me."

"I didn't know you had meant to marry him yourself, Angel, or I should have been more careful."

"Well, never mind! only, you see, he'd make such a comfortable husband."

"How? Comfortable?"

"Yes, comfortable. Now, with Maurice, you'd never know where you had him. When you wanted him, he'd always be flying round somewhere else. Of course, he's a darling, much bigger than Ted, and funnier, don't you think? but not so comfortable for a *husband*." Angelica's tone is ripe with marital experience. "Now, Ted would just go down to the theatre and come back and keep quiet, and tell you lovely long stories, whenever you hadn't anything else to do. Yes, I think perhaps Ted's the best."

"I am sure Ted's the best." I am conscious of a note of lingering tenderness in my voice, which does not escape my niece's sharp ear.

"Why, Kitty, I do believe you really *like* Ted!"

"One doesn't marry anyone unless one loves them very much, Angel."

"Oh! yes, you do. Why, I heard Mummie say the other day that Cousin Lottie was marrying solely—yes, 'solely' was the word—for a 'stablishment. What's a ''stablishment,' Kitty?"

"It only means that as Cousin Lottie isn't at all rich, darling, she has to marry a rich man. It doesn't follow that she doesn't love him."

"But it does. I've seen her and him together"—this contemptuously—"and they didn't do a bit like loviers."

"Why, what *do* you know about it, Angel?"

"*I know.* Our Susan has a young man, and I ran into the kitchen the other day, and he was sitting with his arm round her waist, and holding her hand and looking like this"—here Angelica twists her face into a fatuous grin that would make the fortune of a low comedian. "Now, Lottie and her man," she continues scornfully, "just sit on two chairs a long way off on two sides of the room, and look at each other like you and me might."

Angelica's grammar leaves much to be desired.

"But ladies and gentlemen don't sit with their arms round each other's waists and look silly in public. You won't see me and Ted doing that."

"Well, no, because, you see, he'll be telling me stories, and there won't be room for you. But when you're alone, Kitty, what'll you do then?"

I feel myself blushing hotly under my small niece's stern eye.

"Don't you want to see my presents that have just come, Angel?" I asked weakly.

"Yes, but I want to know essactly what you and Ted are going to do when you're alone, and there isn't nobody to see you."

I walk to the door and open it. Thank Heaven! I hear a voice clear and peremptory—

"Miss Angel, Miss *Angel!*"

"Angel, there's Dinah calling."

"Then I must go; but I want to see the presents. And, Kitty, will Ted be my uncle?"

"Yes, dear, yes."

"Well, all I hope is, that you'll behave like real loviers, and I'll be your bridesmaid, Kitty dear, and——"

"Miss Angel, *are* you coming."

"Yes Dinah, coming, coming!" and with all her dignity and impudence thrown to the winds, Angelica makes a bolt for the nursery and I heave a deep sigh of relief. I have announced our engagement.

MARIA: How kin these weather prophets tell the weather, anyway?

JOSIAH: I dunno; unless mebbe they go by the almanacs.

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Modesty

Would'st Chloe's beauty praise?
All beauty she denies
Soft blushes come and go

A mirror dost thou raise?
She vows the mirror lies
Oh! would she know
The virtue of her charm, she need
but gaze,
In my enchanted eyes.

E. L. Levetus.

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YESTERDAY afternoon Bobby burst into the house in a state of high excitement. His hands and clothing were smeared with a liberal amount of some sticky substance, and his face wore a glow of triumphant satisfaction.

"I say, mamma; those new people across the way don't know much!" he exclaimed. "They've got a sign on their front door that says 'WET PAINT!'"

"And you've been getting into it! You ought to be ashamed of yourself!" said Mrs. Norris severely. "That sign was put up to warn people to keep away from it."

"Yes, mamma," persisted Bobby, with the enthusiasm of a richly rewarded scientific investigator; "But it wasn't paint, and I knew it. *It's varnish!*"

A DOCTOR was called to attend a patient who, on being asked if he had not taken something strange into his system, said he believed he had. "It must have been that glass of water. Haven't been so imprudent for ten years."

AN old lady, who is very much of a bore, paid a visit to a family of her acquaintance. She prolonged her stay, and finally said to one of the children, "I'm going away directly, Stanley, and I want you to go part of the way with me." "Can't do it. We are going to have dinner as soon as you leave," replied Stanley.

"PLEASE, Mr. Policeman, have you seen a lady that has lost a little boy? 'cos, if so, I'm that little boy."

WHEN a man gets the last word in an argument with a woman, it is because she gives it to him.

VISITOR: Can your daughter play the piano?

FOND MOTHER (proudly): Well, no; but it wouldn't take her long to learn. You should just see how she handles a typewriter!

TOMMY: Why shouldn't I ever call anyone a liar?

UNCLE JACK: Because, my lad, if he isn't, it will hurt his feelings; and if he is, he will hurt yours.

FRIEND (noticing the confused heap of goods of every description scattered promiscuously about the shop): Halloa! What's happened? Been taking an inventory, had a fire, or are you going to move out?

DRAPER: That shows how little you know about a draper's shop. We have merely been waiting on a lady who dropped in for a packet of pins.

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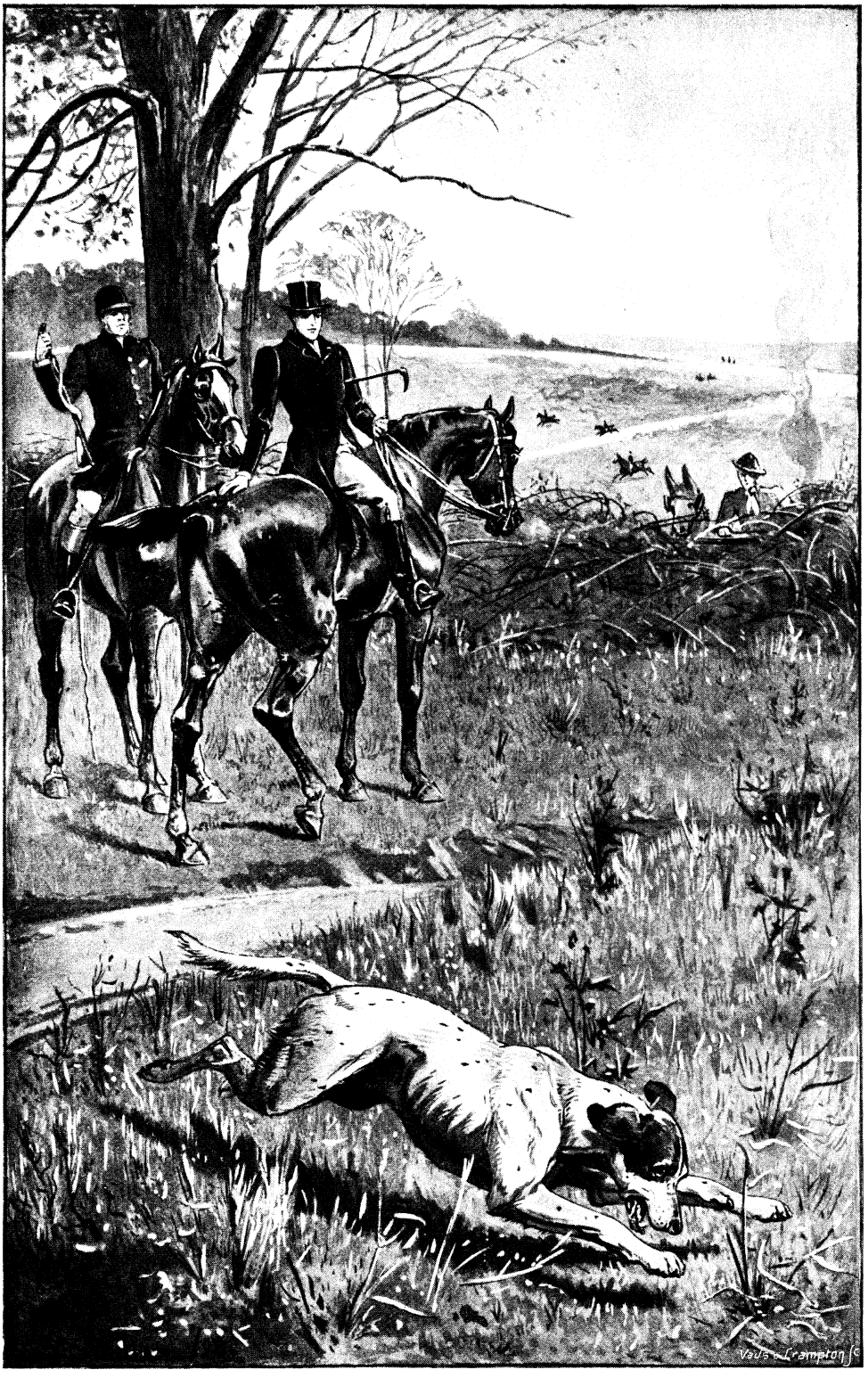

THE KING OF THE KENNEL. BY S. E. WALLER.

"When we're all in a muddle, beat, baffled, and blown,—See! Bachelor has it, Bill; let him alone!
Speak to it, Bachelor; go, hark to him! Hark!"

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STALKY & CO.

BY RUDYARD KIPLING.*

Illustrated by L. RAVEN HILL.

No. IV.—THE MORAL REFORMERS.

THERE was no disguising the defeat. The victory was to Prout, but they grudged it not. If he had broken the rules of the game by calling in the Head, they had had a good run for their money.

The Reverend John sought the earliest opportunity of talking things over. Members of a bachelor Common Room, of a school where masters' studies are designedly dotted among studies and form-rooms, can, if they choose, see a great deal of their charges. Number Five had spent some cautious years in testing the Reverend John. He was emphatically a gentleman. He knocked at a study door before entering; he comported himself as a visitor and not a strayed lictor; he never prosed, and he never carried over into official life the confidences of idle hours. Prout was ever an unmitigated nuisance; King came solely as the avenger of blood; even little Hartopp, talking natural history, seldom forgot his office; but the Reverend John was a guest desired and beloved by Number Five.

Behold him, then, in their only armchair, a bent briar between his teeth, chin down in three folds on his clerical collar, and blowing like an amiable whale, while Number Five discoursed of life as it appeared to them, and specially of that last interview with the Head—in the matter of usury.

"One licking once a week would do you an immense amount of good," he said, twinkling and shaking all over; "and, as you say, you were entirely in the right."

"Ra-ather, Padre! We could have proved it if he'd let us talk," said Stalky; "but he didn't. The Head's a downy bird."

"He understands you perfectly. Ho! ho! Well, you worked hard enough for it."

"But he's awfully fair. He doesn't lick a chap in the morning an' preach at him in the afternoon," said Beetle.

"He can't; he ain't in Orders, thank goodness!" said McTurk. Number Five held the very strongest views on clerical head-masters, and were ever ready to meet their pastor in argument.

"Almost all other schools have clerical Heads," said the Reverend John gently.

"It isn't fair on the chaps," Stalky replied. "Makes 'em sulky. Of course it's different with *you*, sir. You belong to the school—same as we do. I mean ordinary clergymen."

"Well, I am a most ordinary clergyman; and Mr. Hartopp's in Orders, too."

"Ye—es, but he took 'em after he came to the Coll. We saw him go up for his exam. *That's* all right," said Beetle. "But just think if the Head went and got ordained!"

"What would happen, Beetle?"

"Oh, the Coll. 'ud go to pieces in a year, sir. There's no doubt o' *that*."

"How d'you know?" The Reverend John was smiling.

"We've been here nearly six years now. There are precious few things about the Coll. we don't know," Stalky replied. "Why, even you came the term after I did, sir. I remember your asking our names in form your first lesson. Mr. King, Mr. Prout, and the Head, of course, are the only masters senior to us—in that way."

"Yes, we've changed a good deal—in Common Room."

"Huh!" said Beetle, with a grunt. "They came here, an' then they went away to get married. Jolly good riddance, too!"

"Doesn't our Beetle hold with matrimony?"

"No, Padre; don't make fun of me. I've met chaps in the holidays who've got married house-masters. It's perfectly awful! They have babies and teething and measles and all that sort of thing right bung *in* the school; and the masters' wives give tea parties—tea parties, Padre!—and ask the chaps to breakfast."

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"That don't matter so much," said Stalky. "But the house-masters let their houses alone, and they leave everything to the prefects. Why, in one school, a chap told me, there were big baize doors and a passage about a mile long between the house and the master's house. They could do just what they pleased."

"Satan rebuking sin, with a vengeance."

"Oh, larks are right enough; but you know what we mean, Padre. After a bit it gets worse an' worse. Then there's a big bust-up and a row that gets into the papers, and a lot of chaps are expelled, you know."

"Always the wrong uns; don't forget that. Have a cup of cocoa, Padre?" said McTurk, with the kettle.

"No, thanks; I'm smoking. Always the wrong uns? Pro-ceed, my Stalky."

"And then"—Stalky warmed to the work—"everybody says, 'Who'd ha' thought it? Shockin' boys! Wicked little kids!' It all comes of havin' married house-masters, *I* think."

"A Daniel come to judgment."

"But it does," McTurk interrupted. "I've met chaps in the holidays, an' they've told me the same thing. It looks awfully pretty for one's people to see—a nice separate house with a nice lady in charge, an' all that. But it isn't. It takes the house-masters off their work, and it gives the prefects a heap too much power, an'—an'—it rots up everything. You see, it isn't as if we were just an ordinary school. We take crammers' rejections as well as good little boys like Stalky. We've got to do that to make our name, of course, and we get 'em into Sandhurst somehow or other, don't we?"

"True, O Turk. Like a book thou talkest, Turkey."

"And so we want rather different masters—don't you think so?—to other places. We aren't like the rest of the schools!"

"It leads to all sorts of bullyin', too, a chap told me," said Beetle.

"Well, you *do* need most of a single man's time, I must say." The Reverend John considered his hosts critically. "But do you never feel that the world—the Common Room—is too much with you sometimes?"

"Not exactly—in summer, anyhow." Stalky's eye roved contentedly to the window. "Our bounds are pretty big, too, and they leave us to ourselves a good deal."

"For example, here am I sitting in your study, very much in your way, eh?"

"Indeed you aren't, Padre. Sit down. Don't go, sir. You know we're glad whenever you come."

There was no doubting the sincerity of the voices. The Rev. John flushed a little with pleasure and refilled his briar.

"And we generally know where the Common Room are," said Beetle triumphantly. "Didn't you come through our lower dormitories last night after ten, sir?"

"I went to smoke a pipe with your house-master. No, I didn't give him any impressions. I took a short cut through your dormitories."

"I sniffed a whiff of baccy this mornin'. Yours is stronger than Mr. Prout's. *I* knew," said Beetle, wagging his head.

"Good Heavens!" said the Reverend John absently. It was some years before Beetle perceived that this was rather a tribute to innocence than observation. The long, light, blindless dormitories, devoid of inner doors, were crossed at all hours of the night by masters visiting one another; for bachelors sit up later than married folk. Beetle had never dreamed that there might be a purpose in this steady policing.

"Talking about bullying," the Reverend John resumed, "you all caught it pretty hot when you were fags, didn't you?"

"Well, we must have been rather awful little beasts," said Beetle, looking serenely over the gulf between eleven and sixteen. "My hat! what bullies they were then—Fairburn, 'Gobby' Maunsell, and all that gang!"

"'Member when 'Gobby' called us the Three Blind Mice, and we had to get up on the lockers and sing while he buzzed inkpots at us?" said Stalky. "They *were* bullies, if you like!"

"But there isn't any of it now," said McTurk soothingly.

"That's where you make a mistake. We're all inclined to say that everything is all right as long as we aren't hurt. I sometimes wonder if it is extinct—bullying."

"Fags bully each other horrid; but the upper forms are supposed to be swottin' up for exams. They've got something else to think about," said Beetle.

"Why? What do you think?" Stalky was watching the Chaplain's face.

"I have my doubts." Then explosively, "On my word, for three moderately intelligent boys you aren't very observant. I suppose you were too busy making things warm for your house-master to see what lay under your noses when you were in the form-rooms last week?"

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"Number Five stared at each other."

"What, sir? I—I swear we didn't see anything," said Beetle.

"Then I'd advise you to look. When a little chap is whimpering in a corner, and wears his clothes like rags, and never does any work, and is notoriously the dirtiest little 'corridor-caution' in the Coll., something's wrong somewhere."

"That's Clewer," said McTurk under his breath.

"Yes, Clewer. He comes to me for his French. It's his first term, and he's almost as complete a wreck as you were, Beetle. He's not naturally clever, but he has been hammered till he's nearly an idiot."

"Oh, no. They sham silly to get off more lickings," said Beetle. "*I* know that."

"I've never actually seen him knocked about," said the Reverend John.

"The genuine article don't do that in public," said Beetle. "Fairburn never touched me when anyone was looking on."

"You needn't swagger about it, Beetle," said McTurk. "We all caught it in our time."

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"But I got it worse than anyone," said Beetle. "If you want an authority on bullyin', Padre, come to me. Corkscrews—brush-drill—keys—head-knucklin'—arm-twistin'—rockin'—Ag Ags—and all the rest of it."

"Yes. I do want you as an authority, or, rather, I want your authority to stop it—all of you."

"What about Abana and Pharpar, Padre—Harrison and Craze? They are Mr. Prout's pets," said McTurk something bitterly. "*We* aren't even sub-prefects."

"I've considered that; but, on the other hand, since most bullying is mere thoughtlessness——"

"Not one little bit of it, Padre," said McTurk. "Bullies like bullyin'. They mean it. They think it up in lesson and practise it in the quarters."

"Never mind. If the thing goes up to the prefects it may make another house-row. You've had one already. Don't laugh. Listen to me. I ask you—my own Tenth Legion—to take the thing up quietly. I want little Clewer made to look fairly clean and decent——"

"Blowed if *I* wash him!" whispered Stalky.

"Decent and self-respecting. As for the other boy, whoever he is, you can use your influence"—a purely secular light flickered in the Chaplain's eye—"in any way you please to—to dissuade him. That's all. I'll leave it to you. Good-night, *mes enfants*."

* * * * *

"Well, what are we goin' to do?" Number Five stared at each other.

"Young Clewer would give his eyes for a place to be quiet in. *I* know that," said Beetle. "If we made him a study-fag—eh?"

"No!" said McTurk firmly. "He's a dirty little brute, and he'd mess up everything. Besides, we ain't goin' to have any beastly Erickin'. D'you want to walk about with your arm round his neck?"

"He'd clean out the jam-pots, anyhow; an' the burnt porridge saucepan—it's filthy now."

"'Not good enough," said Stalky, bringing up both heels with a crash on the table. "If we find the merry jester who's been bullyin' him an' make him happy, that'll be all right. Why didn't we spot him when we were in the form-rooms, though?"

"Maybe a lot of fags have made a dead set at Clewer. They do that sometimes."

"Then we'll have to kick the whole of the lower school in our house—on spec. Come on," said McTurk.

"Keep your hair on! We mustn't make a fuss about the biznai. Whoever it is, he's kept quiet or we'd have seen him," said Stalky. "We'll walk round and sniff about till we're sure."

They drew the house form-rooms, accounting for every junior and senior against whom they had suspicions—investigated, at Beetle's suggestion, the lavatories and box-rooms, but without result. Everybody seemed to be present save Clewer.

"Rum!" said Stalky, pausing outside a study door. "Golly!"

A thin piping mixed with tears came muffled through the panels.

"*As beautiful Kilty one morning was tripping*——"

"Louder, you young devil, or I'll buzz a book at you!"

"*With a pitcher of milk*——Oh, Campbell, *please* don't! *To the fair of*——"

A book crashed on something soft, and squeals arose.

"Well, I never thought it was a study-chap, anyhow. That accounts for our not spotting him," said Beetle. "Sefton and Campbell are rather hefty chaps to tackle. Besides, one can't go into their study like a form-room."

"What swine!" McTurk listened. "Where's the fun of it? I suppose Clewer's faggin' for them."

"They aren't prefects. That's one good job," said Stalky, with his war-grin. "Sefton and Campbell! Um! Campbell and Sefton! Ah! One of 'em's a crammer's pup."

The two were precocious, hairy youths between seventeen and eighteen, sent to the school in despair by parents who hoped that six months' steady cram might, perhaps, jockey them into Sandhurst. Nominally they were in Mr. Prout's house; actually they were under the Head's eye; and since he was very careful never to promote strange new boys to prefectships, they considered they had a grievance against the school. Sefton had spent three months with a London crammer, and the tale of his adventures there lost nothing in the telling. Campbell, who had a fine taste in clothes and a fluent vocabulary, followed his lead in looking down loftily on the rest of the world. This was only their second term, and the school, used to what it profanely called "crammers' pups," had treated them with rather galling reserve. But their whiskers—

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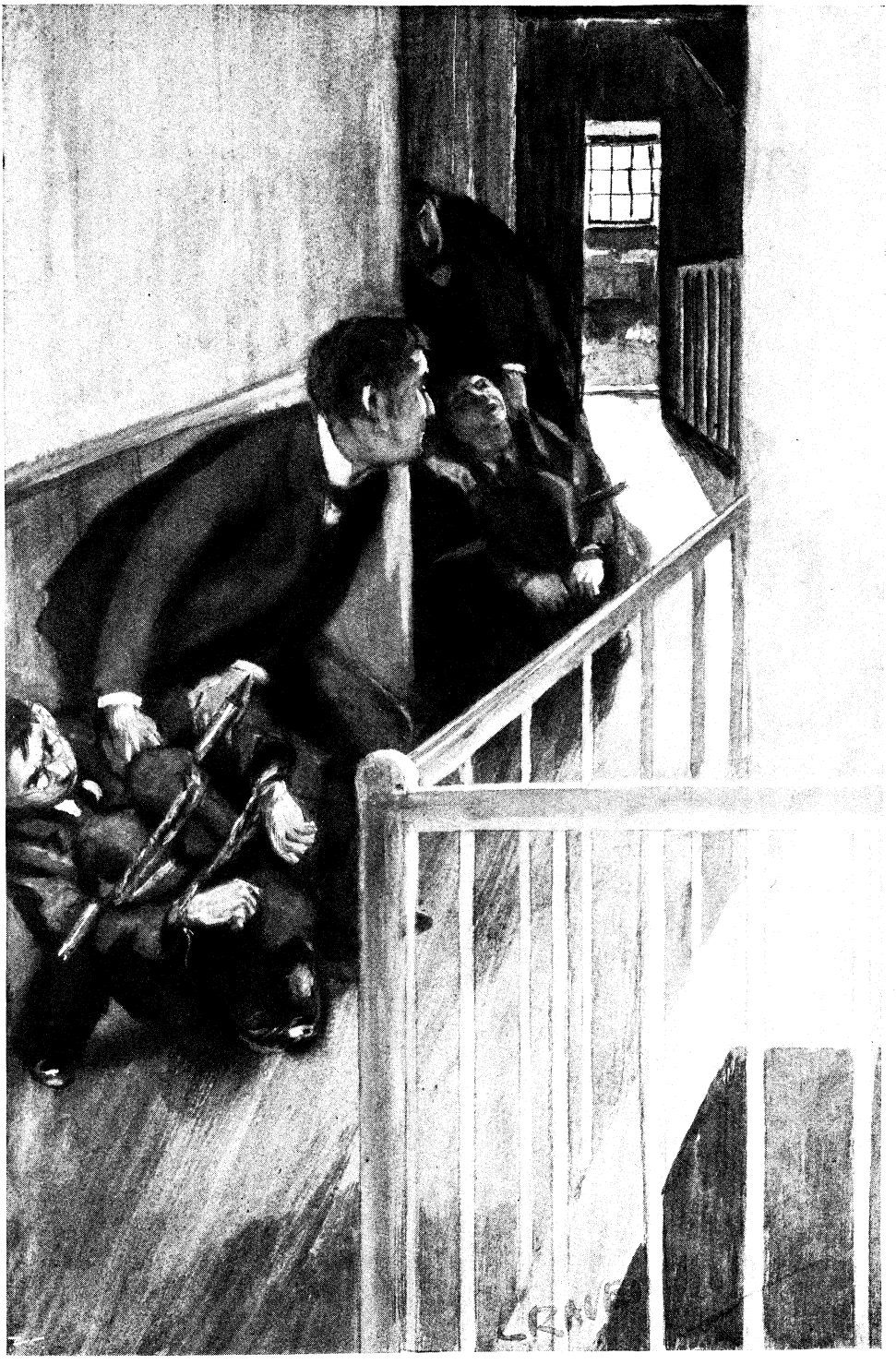

"'Lug 'em into our study.'"

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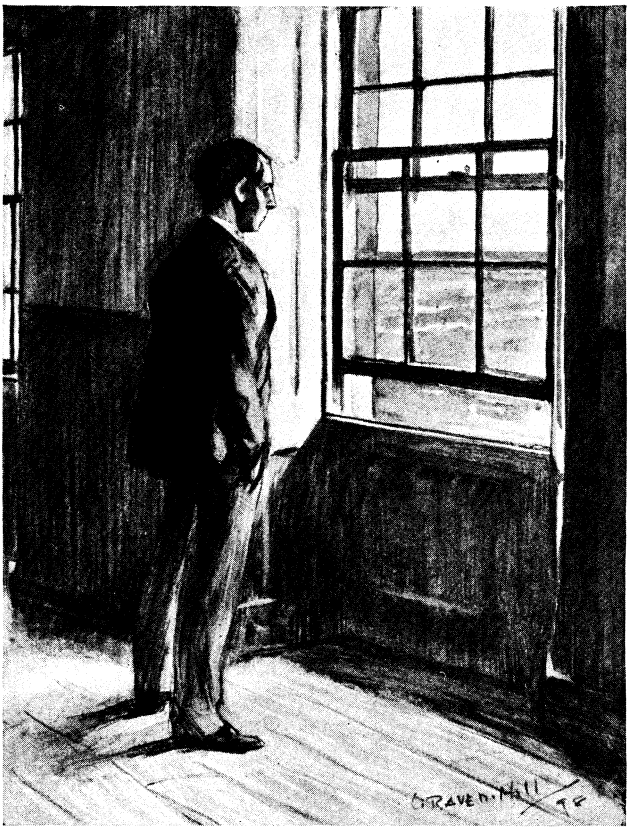
Sefton owned a real razor—and their moustaches were beyond question impressive.

"Shall we go in an' dissuade 'em?" McTurk asked. "I've never had much to do with 'em, but I'll bet my hat Campbell's a funk."

"No—o! That's *oratio directa*," said Stalky, shaking his head. "I like *oratio obliqua*. 'Sides, where'd our moral influence be then? Think o' that!"

"Rot! What are you goin' to do?"



"And stared out of window at the sea."

Beetle turned into Lower Number Nine form-room, next door to the study.

"Me?" The lights of war flickered over Stalky's face. "Oh, I want to jape with 'em. Shut up a bit!"

He drove his hands into his pockets and stared out of window at the sea, whistling between his teeth. Then a foot tapped the floor; one shoulder lifted; he wheeled, and began the short quick double-shuffle—the war-dance of Stalky in meditation. Thrice he crossed the empty form-room, with compressed lips and expanded nostrils, swaying and rocking to the quick-step. Then he halted before the dumb Beetle and softly knuckled his head, Beetle bowing to the strokes. McTurk nursed one knee and rocked to and fro. They could hear Clewer howling as though his heart would break.

"Beetle is the sacrifice," Stalky said at last. "I'm sorry for you, Beetle. 'Member Galton's 'Art of Travel' (one of the forms had been studying that pleasant work) an' the kid whose bleatin' excited the tiger?"

"Oh, curse!" said Beetle uneasily. It was not his first season as a sacrifice. "Can't you get on without me?"

"'Fraid not, Beetle dear. You've got to be bullied by Turkey an' me. The more you howl, o' course, the better it'll be. Turkey, go an' covet a stump and a box-rope from somewhere. We'll tie him up for a kill—*à la* Galton. 'Member when 'Molly' Fairburn made us cock-fight with our shoes off, an' tied up our knees?"

"But that hurt like sin."

"'Course it did. What a clever chap you are, Beetle! Turkey'll knock you all over the place. 'Member we've had a big row all round, an' I've trapped you into doin' this. Lend us your wipe."

Beetle was trussed for cock-fighting; but, in addition to the transverse stump between elbow and knee, his knees were bound with a box-rope. In this posture, at a push from Stalky, he rolled over sideways, covering himself with dust.

"Ruffle his hair, Turkey. Now you get down, too. The bleatin' of the kid excites the tiger. You two are in such a sweatin' wax with me that you only curse. 'Member that. I'll tickle you up with a stump. You'll have to blub, Beetle."

"Right O! I'll work up to that in half a shake," said Beetle.

"Now begin—and remember the bleatin' o' the kid."

"Shut up, you brutes! Let me up! You've nearly cut my knees off! Oh, you *are* beastly cads! *Do* shut up! 'Tisn't a joke!" Beetle's protest was, in tone, a work of art.

"Give it him, Turkey! Kick him! Roll him over! Kill him! Don't funk, Beetle, you brute. Kick him again, Turkey."

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"He's not blubbin' really. Roll up, Beetle, or I'll kick you into the fender!" roared McTurk.

They made a hideous noise among them, and the bait allured their quarry.

"Hullo! What's the giddy jest?" Sefton and Campbell entered to find Beetle on his side, his head against the fender, weeping copiously, while McTurk prodded him in the back with his toes.

"It's only Beetle," Stalky explained. "He's shammin' hurt. I can't get Turkey to go for him properly."

Sefton promptly kicked both boys, and his face lighted. "All right, I'll attend to 'em. Get up an' cock-fight, you two. Give me the stump. I'll tickle 'em. Here's a giddy jest! Come on, Campbell. Let's cook 'em."

Then McTurk turned on Stalky and called him very evil names.

"You said you were goin' to cock-fight, too, Stalky. Come on!"

"More ass you for believin' me, then!" shrieked Stalky.

"Have you chaps had a row?" said Campbell.

"Row?" said Stalky. "Huh! I'm only educatin' them. D'you know anything about cock-fighting, Seffy?"

"Do I know? Why, at Maclagan's, where I was crammin' in town, we used to cock-fight in his drawing-room, and little Maclagan daren't say anything. But we were just the same as men there, of course. Do I know? I'll show you."

"Can't I get up?" moaned Beetle, as Stalky sat on his shoulder.

"Don't jaw, you fat piffler. You're going to fight Seffy?"

"He'll slay me!"

"Oh, lug 'em into our study," said Campbell. "It's nice an' quiet in there. I'll cock-fight Turkey. This is an improvement on young Clewer."

"Right O. I move it's shoes-off for them an' shoes-on for us," said Sefton joyously, and the two were flung down on the study floor. Stalky rolled them behind an armchair.

"Now I'll tie you two up an' direct the bull-fight. Golly, what wrists you have, Seffy. They're too thick for a wipe; got a box-rope?" said he.

"Lots in the corner," Sefton replied. "Hurry up! Stop blubbin', you brute, Beetle. We're goin' to have a giddy campaign. Losers have to sing for the winners—sing odes in honour of the conqueror. You call yourself a beastly poet, don't you, Beetle? I'll poet you." He wriggled into position by Campbell's side.

Swiftly and scientifically the stumps were thrust through the natural crooks, the wrists tied with well-stretched box-ropes to an accompaniment of insults from McTurk, bound, betrayed, and voluble behind the chair.

Stalky set away Campbell and Sefton, and strode over to his allies, locking the door on the way.

"And that's all right," said he in a changed voice.

"What the devil——?" Sefton began. Beetle's false tears had ceased; McTurk, smiling, was on his feet. Together they bound the knees and ankles of the enemy with some more rope.

Stalky took the armchair and contemplated the scene with his blandest smile. A man trussed for cock-fighting is, perhaps, the most helpless thing in the world.

"The bleatin' of the kid excites the tiger. Oh, you frabjous asses!" He lay back and laughed till he could no more. The victims took in the situation but slowly.

"We'll give you the finest lickin' you ever had in your young lives when we get up!" thundered Sefton from the floor. "You'll laugh the other side of your mouth before you've done. What the deuce d'you mean by this?"

"You'll see in two shakes," said McTurk. "Don't swear like that. What we want to know is, why you two hulkin' swine have been bullyin' Clewer?"

"It's none of your business."

"What did you bully Clewer for?" The question was repeated with maddening iteration by each in turn.

"Because we jolly well chose!" was the answer at last. "Let's get up." Even then they could not realise the game.

"Well, now we're goin' to bully you because we jolly well choose. We're goin' to be just as fair to you as you were to Clewer. He couldn't do anything against you. You can't do anything to us. Odd, ain't it?"

"Can't we? You wait an' see."

"Ah," said Beetle reflectively, "that shows you've never been properly jested with. A public lickin' ain't in it with a gentle jape. Bet a bob you'll weep an' promise anything."

"Look here, young Beetle, we'll half kill you when we get up. I'll promise you that, at any rate."

"You're going to be half killed first,

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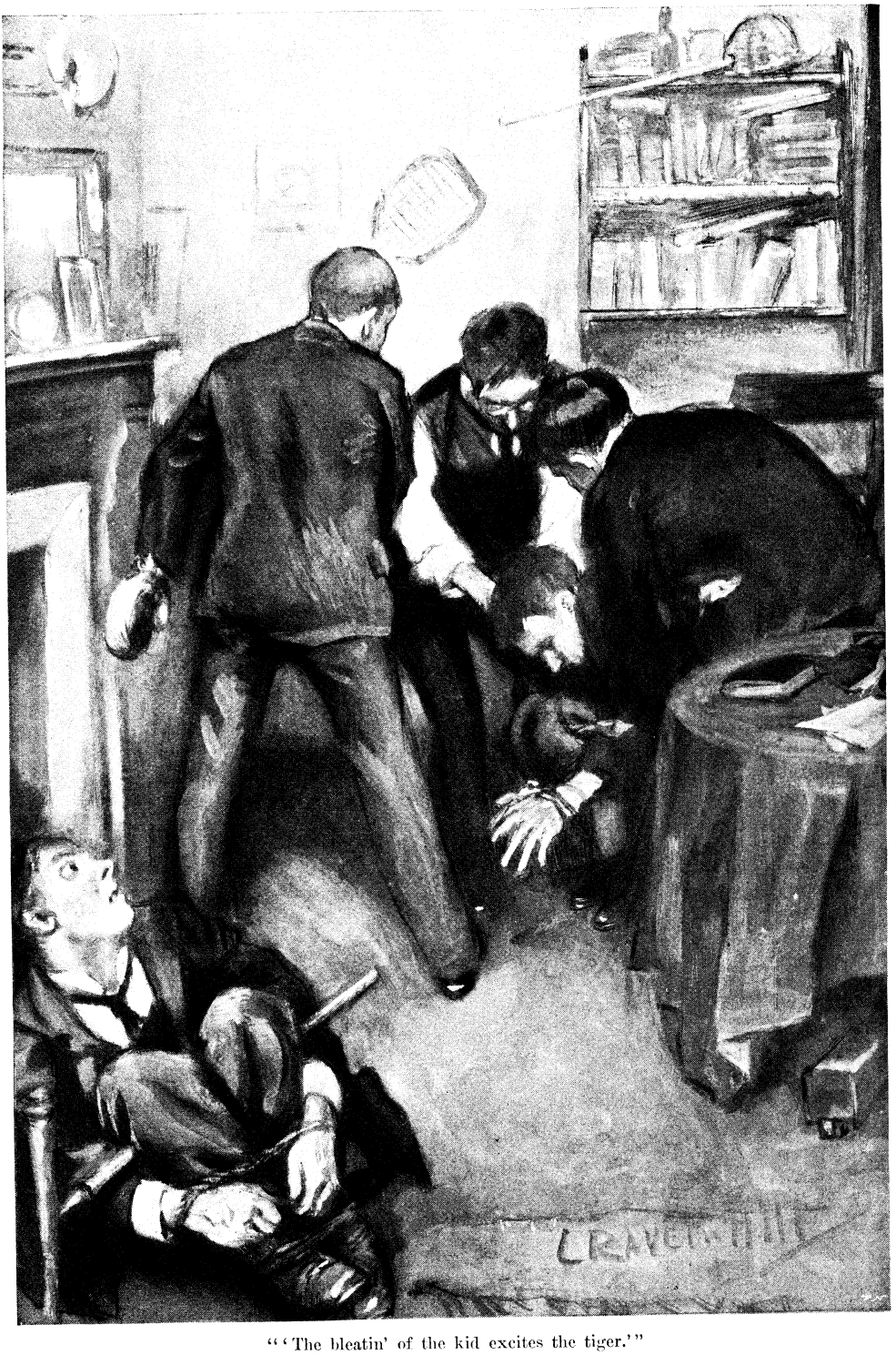

"'The bleatin' of the kid excites the tiger.'"

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though. Did you give Clewer Head-knuckles ?"

"Did you give Clewer Head-knuckles ?" McTurk echoed. At the twentieth repetition—no boy can stand the torture of one unvarying query, which is the essence of bullying—came confession—

"We did, confound you !"

"Then you'll be knuckled ;" and knuckled they were, according to ancient experience. Head-knuckling is no trifle ; "Molly" Fairburn of the old days could not have done better.

"Did you give Clewer Brush-drill ?"

This time the question was answered sooner, and Brush-drill was dealt out for the space of five minutes by Stalky's watch. They could not even writhe in their bonds. No brush is employed in Brush-drill.

"Did you give Clewer the Key ?"

"No ; we didn't. I swear we didn't !" from Campbell, rolling in agony.

"Then we'll give it you, so you can see what it would be like if you had."

The torture of the Key—which has no key at all—hurts excessively. They endured several minutes of it, and their language necessitated the gag.

"Did you give Clewer Corkscrews ?"

"Yes. Oh, curse your silly souls ! Let us alone, you cads."

They were corkscrewed, and the torture of the Corkscrew—this has nothing to do with corkscrews—is keener than the torture of the Key.

The method and silence of the attacks was breaking their nerves. Between each new torture came the pitiless, dazing rain of questions, and when they did not reply to the point, Isabella-coloured handkerchiefs rolled into wads were thrust into their mouths.

"Now, are those all the things you did to Clewer ? Take out the gag, Turkey, and let 'em answer."

"Yes, I swear that was all. Oh, you're killing us, Stalky !" cried Campbell.

"That's what Clewer said to you. I heard him. Now we're goin' to show you what real bullyin' is. What I don't like about you, Sefton, is, you come to the Coll. with your stick-up collars an' patent-leather boots, an' you think you can teach us something about bullying. *Do* you think you can teach us anything about bullying ? Take out the gag and let him answer."

"No !"—ferociously.

"He says no. Rock him to sleep. Campbell can watch."

It needs three boys and two boxing-gloves to rock a boy to sleep. Again the operation has nothing to do with its name. Sefton was "rocked" till his eyes set in his head and he gasped and crowed for breath, sick and dizzy.

"My Aunt !" said Campbell, appalled, from his corner, and turned white.

"Put him away," said Stalky. "Bring on Campbell. Now this *is* bullyin'. Oh, I forgot ! I say, Campbell, what did you bully Clewer for ? Take out his gag and let him answer."

"I—I don't know. Oh, let me off ! I swear I'll make it pax. Don't 'rock' me !"

"'The bleatin' of the kid excites the tiger.' He says he don't know. Set him up, Beetle. Give me the glove an' put in the gag."

In silence Campbell was "rocked" sixty-four times.

"I believe I'm goin' to die !" he gasped.

"He says he is goin' to die. Put him away. Now, Sefton ! Oh, I forgot ! Sefton, what did you bully Clewer for ?"

The answer is unprintable ; but it produced not the faintest flush on Stalky's downy cheek.

"Make him an Ag Ag, Turkey !"

And an Ag Ag was he made, forthwith. The hard-bought experience of nearly eighteen years was at his disposal, but he did not seem to appreciate it."

"He says we are sweeps. Put him away ! Now, Campbell ! Oh, I forgot ! I say, Campbell, what did you bully Clewer for ?"

Then came the tears—scalding tears ; appeals for mercy and abject promises of peace. Let them cease the tortures, and Campbell would never lift hand against them. The questions began again—to an accompaniment of small persuasions.

"You seem hurt, Campbell. Are you hurt ?"

"Yes. Awfully !"

"He says he is hurt. Are you broke ?"

"Yes, yes ! I swear I am. Oh, stop !"

"He says he is broke. Are you humble ?"

"Yes !"

"He says he is humble. Are you devilish humble ?"

"Yes !"

"He says he is devilish humble. Will you bully Clewer any more ?"

"No. No—ooh !"

"He says he won't bully Clewer. Or anyone else ?"

"No. I swear I won't."

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"Or anyone else. What about that lickin' you and Sefton were goin' to give us?"

"I won't! I won't! I swear I won't!"

"He says he won't lick us. Do you esteem yourself to know anything about bullyin'?"

"No, I don't!"

"He says he doesn't know anything about bullyin'. Haven't we taught you a lot?"

"Yes—yes!"

"He says we've taught him a lot. Aren't you grateful?"

"Yes!"

"He says he is grateful. Put him away. Oh, I forgot! I say, Campbell, what did you bully Clewer for?"

He wept anew, his nerves being raw. "Because I was a bully. I suppose that's what you want me to say?"

"He says he is a bully. Right he is. Put him in the corner. No more japes for Campbell. Now, Sefton!"

"You devils! You young devils!" This and much more as he was punted across the carpet by skilful knees.

"'The bleatin' of the kid excites the tiger.' We're goin' to make you beautiful. Where does he keep his shaving things? (Campbell told.) Beetle, get some water. Turkey, make the lather. We're goin' to shave you, Seffy, so you'd better lie jolly still, or you'll get cut. I've never shaved anyone before."

"Don't! Oh, don't! *Please* don't!"

"Gettin' polite, eh? I'm only goin' to take off one ducky little whisker——"

"I'll—I'll make it pax, if you don't. I swear I'll let you off your lickin' when I get up!"

"——*and* half that moustache we're so proud of. He says he'll let us off our lickin'. Isn't he kind?"

McTurk laughed into the nickel-plated shaving cup, and settled Sefton's head between Stalky's vice-like knees.

"Hold on a shake," said Beetle, "you can't shave long hairs. You've got to cut all that moustache short first, an' then scrape him."

"Well, I'm not goin' to hunt about for scissors. Won't a match do? Chuck us the matchbox. He *is* a hog, you know; we might as well singe him. Lie still!"

He lit a vesta, but checked his hand. "I only want to take off half, though."

"That's all right"—Beetle waved the brush—"I'll lather up to the middle—see?—and you can burn off the rest."

The thin-haired first moustache of youth fluffed off in flame to the lather line in the centre of the lip, and Stalky rubbed away the burnt stumpage with his thumb. It was not a very gentle shave, but it abundantly accomplished its purpose.

"Now the whisker on the other side. Turn him over!" Between match and razor this, too, was removed. "Give him his shaving-glass. Take the gag out. I want to hear what he'll say."

But there were no words. Sefton gazed at the lop-sided wreck in horror and despair. Two fat tears rolled down his cheek.

"Oh, I forgot! I say, Sefton, what did you bully Clewer for?"

"Leave me alone! Oh, you infernal bullies, leave me alone! Haven't I had enough?"

"He says we must leave him alone," said McTurk.

"He says we are bullies, an' we haven't even begun yet," said Beetle. "You're ungrateful, Seffy. Golly! You *do* look an atrocity and a half!"

"He says he has had enough," said Stalky. "He errs!"

"Well, to work, to work!" chanted McTurk, waving a stump. "Come on, my giddy Narcissus. Don't fall in love with your own reflection!"

"Oh, let him off," said Campbell from his corner; "he's blubbing, too."

Sefton cried like a twelve-year-old with pain, shame, wounded vanity, and utter helplessness.

"You'll make it pax, Sefton, won't you? You can't stand up to those young devils——"

"Don't be rude, Campbell, dear," said McTurk, "or you'll catch it again!"

"You *are* devils, you know," said Campbell.

"What? For a little bullyin'—same as you've been givin' Clewer! How long have you been jestin' with him?" said Stalky. "All this term?"

"We didn't always knock him about, though!"

"You did when you could catch him," said Beetle, cross-legged on the floor, dropping a stump from time to time across Sefton's instep. "Don't I know it?"

"I—perhaps we did."

"And you went out of your way to catch him? Don't I know it? Because he was an awful little beast, eh? Don't I know it? Now, you see, *you're* awful beasts, and you're gettin' what he got—for bein' a beast. Just because we choose."

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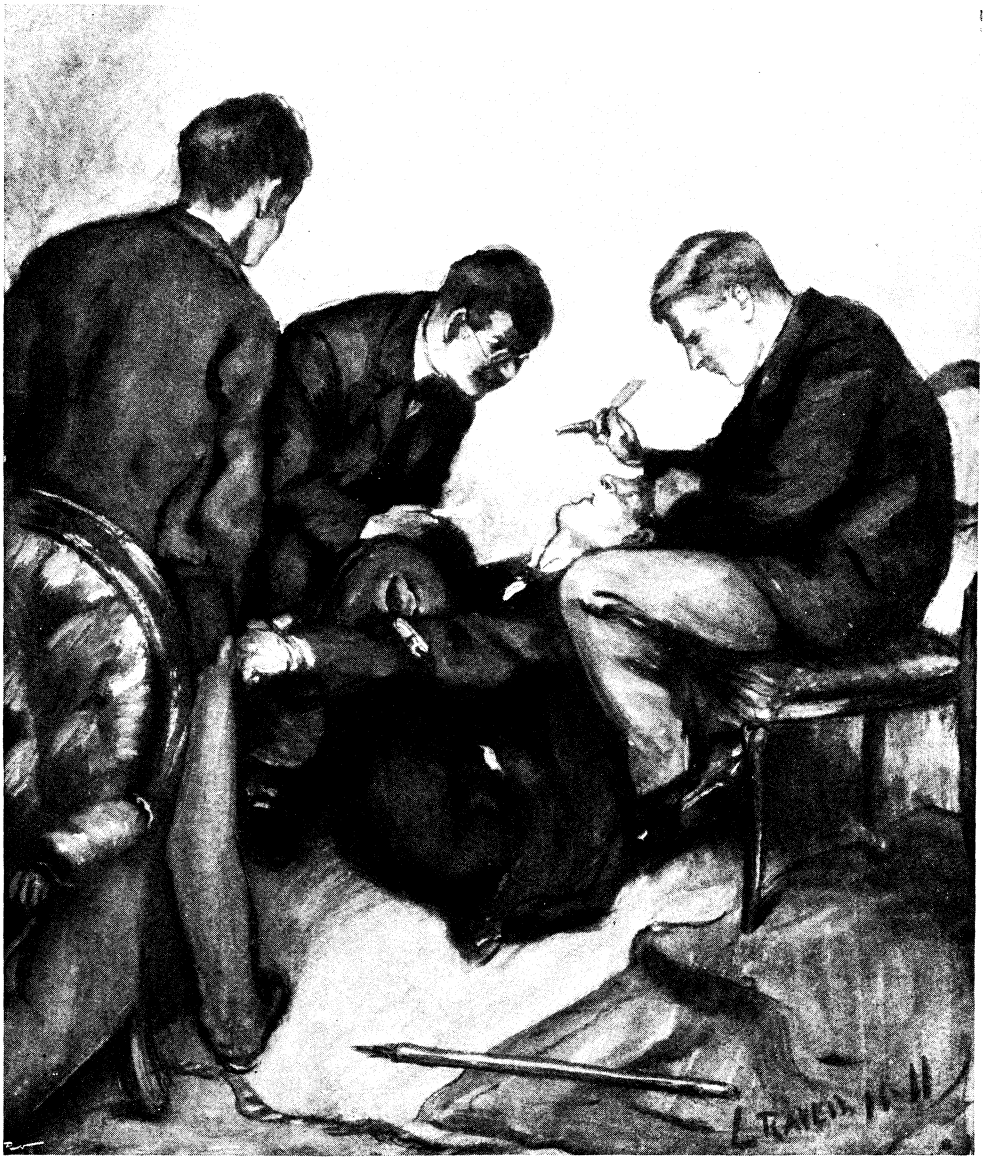

"It was not a very gentle shave."

"We never really bullied him—like you've done us."

"Yah!" said Beetle. "They never really bully—'Molly' Fairburn didn't. Only knock 'em about a little bit. That's what they say. Only kick their souls out of 'em, and they go and blub in the box-rooms. Shove their heads into the ulsters an' blub. Write home three times a day—yes, you brute, I've done that—askin' to be taken away. *You've* never been bullied properly, Campbell. I'm sorry you made pax."

"*I'm* not!" said Campbell, who was a humourist in a way. "Look out, you're slaying Sefton!"

In his excitement Beetle had used the stump unreflectingly, and Sefton was now shouting for mercy.

"An' you!" he cried, wheeling where he sat. "You've never been bullied, either. Where were you before you came here?"

"I—I had a tutor."

"Yah! You would. You never blubbed

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in your life. But you're blubbin' now, by gum! Aren't you blubbin'?"

"Can't you see, you blind beast?" Sefton fell over sideways, tear-tracks furrowing the dried lather. Crack came the cricket-stump on the curved latter-end of him.

"Blind, am I?" said Beetle, "and a beast? Shut up, Stalky. I'm goin' to jape a bit with our friend, *à la* 'Molly' Fairburn. *I* think I can see. Can't I see, Sefton?"

"The point is well taken," said McTurk, watching the stump at work. "You'd better say that he sees, Seffy."

"You do—you do! I swear you do!" yelled Sefton, for strong arguments were coercing him.

"Aren't my eyes lovely?" The stump rose and fell steadily throughout this catechism.

"Yes."

"A gentle hazel, aren't they?"

"Yes—oh, yes!"

"What a liar you are! They're sky-blue. Ain't they sky-blue?"

"Yes—oh, yes!"

"You don't know your mind from one minute to another. You must learn—you must learn."

"What a bait you're in!" said Stalky. "Keep your hair on, Beetle."

"I've had it done to me," said Beetle. "Now—about my being a beast."

"Pax—oh, pax!" cried Sefton; "make it pax. I'll give up! Let me off! No more! I'm broke! I can't stand it!"

"Ugh! Just when we were gettin' our hand in!" grunted McTurk. "They didn't let Clewer off, I'll swear."

"Confess—apologise—quick!" said Stalky.

From the floor Sefton made unconditional surrender, more abjectly even than Campbell. He would never touch anyone again. He would go softly all the days of his life.

"We've got to take it, I suppose?" said Stalky. "All right, Sefton. You're broke? Very good. Shut up, Beetle! But before we let you up, you an' Campbell will kindly oblige us with 'Kitty of Coleraine'—*à la* Clewer."

"That's not fair," said Campbell; "we've surrendered."

"'Course you have. *Now* you're goin' to do what we tell you—same as Clewer would. If you hadn't surrendered you'd ha' been really bullied. Havin' surrendered—do you follow, Seffy?—you sing odes in honour of the conquerors. Hurry up!"

They dropped into chairs luxuriously. Campbell and Sefton looked at each other, and, neither taking comfort in that view, struck up "Kitty of Coleraine."

"Vile bad," said Stalky, as the miserable wailing ended. "If you hadn't surrendered it would have been our painful duty to buzz books at you for singin' out o' tune. Now, then."

He freed them from their bonds, but for several minutes they could not rise. Campbell was first on his feet, smiling uneasily. Sefton staggered to the table, buried his head in his arms, and shook with sobs. There was no shadow of fight in either—only amazement, distress, and shame.

"Ca—can't he shave clean before tea, please?" said Campbell. "It's ten minutes to bell."

Stalky shook his head. He meant to escort the half-shaved one to the meal.

McTurk yawned in his chair and Beetle mopped his face. They were all dripping with excitement and exertion.

"If I knew anything about it, I swear I'd give you a moral lecture," said Stalky severely.

"Don't jaw; they've surrendered," said McTurk. "This moral suasion biznai takes it out of a chap."

"Don't you see how gentle we've been? We might have called Clewer in to look at you," said Stalky. "The bleatin' of the tiger excites the kid. But we didn't. We've only got to tell a few chaps in Coll. about this and you'd be hooted all over the shop. Your life wouldn't be worth havin'. But we aren't goin' to do that, either. We're strictly moral suasers, Campbell; so, unless you or Seffy split about this, no one will."

"I swear you're a brick," said Campbell. "I suppose I was rather a brute to Clewer."

"It looked like it," said Stalky. "But I don't think Seffy need come into hall with cock-eye whiskers. Horrid bad for the fags if they saw him. He can shave. Ain't you grateful, Sefton?"

The head did not lift. Sefton was deeply asleep.

"That's rummy," said McTurk, as a snore mixed with a sob. "'Cheek, *I* think, or he's shammin'."

"No, 'tisn't," said Beetle. "When 'Molly' Fairburn had attended to me for an hour or so I used to go bung off to sleep on a form sometimes. Poor devil! But he called me a beastly poet, though."

"Well, come on." Stalky lowered his voice. "Good-bye, Campbell. 'Member, if you don't talk, nobody will."

There should have been a war-dance, but

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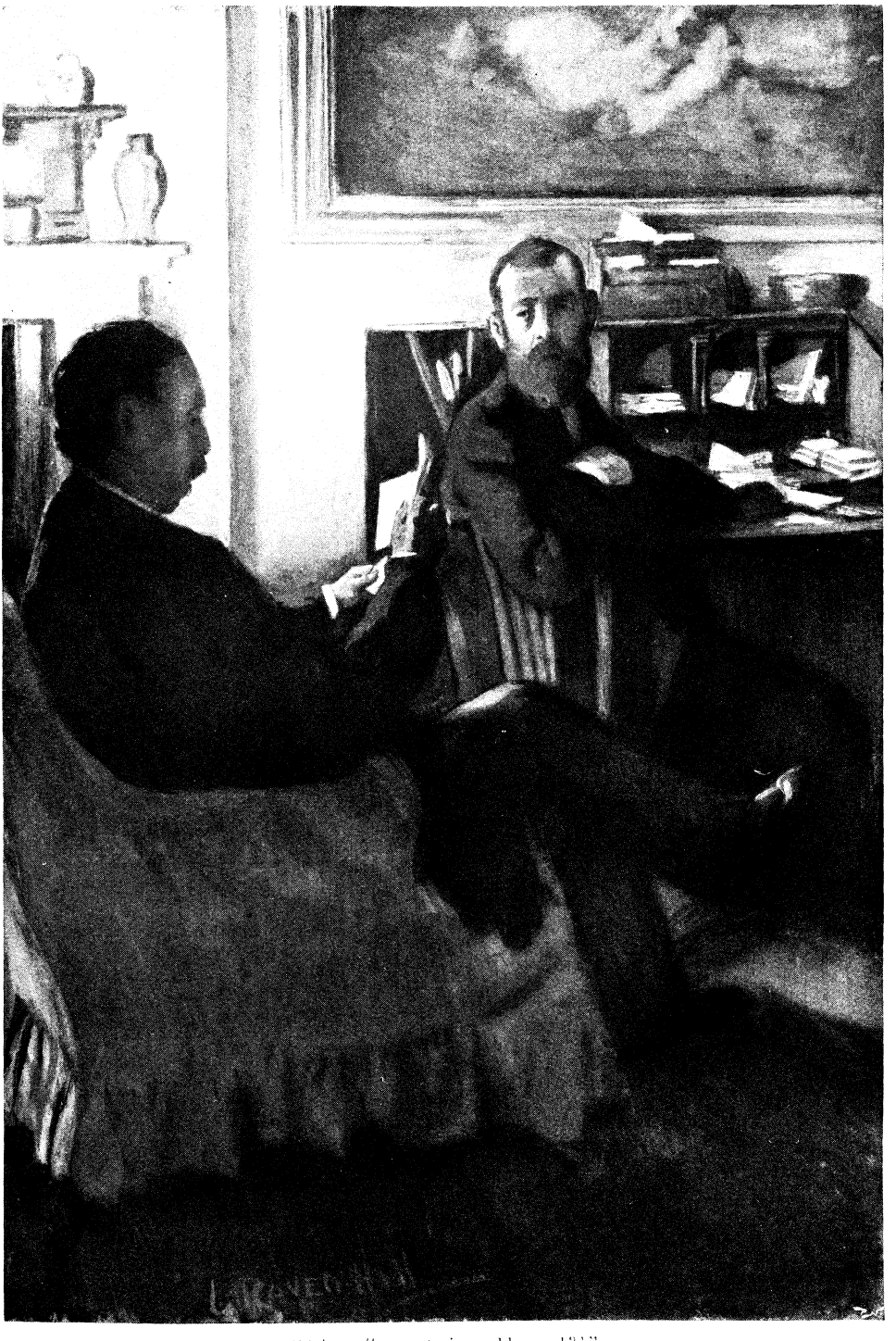

"'Are *all* parents incurably mad?'"

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that all three were so utterly tired that they almost went to sleep above the tea-cups in their study, and slept till prep.

* * * * *

"A most extraordinary letter. Are *all* parents incurably mad? What do you make of it?" said the Head, handing a closely-written eight pages to the Reverend John.

"'The only son of his mother, and she was a widow.' That is the least reasonable sort." The Chaplain read with pursed lips.

"If half those charges are true he should be in the sick-house; whereas he is disgustingly well. Certainly he has shaved. I noticed that."

"Under compulsion, as his mother points out. How delicious! How salutary!"

"*You* haven't to answer her. It isn't often I don't know what has happened in the school; but this is beyond me."

"If you asked me I should say seek not to participate. When one is forced to take crammers' pups——"

"He was perfectly well at extra-tuition—with me—this morning," said the Head absently. "Unusually well-behaved, too."

"——they either educate the school, or the school, as in this case, educates them. I prefer our own methods," the Chaplain concluded.

"You think it was that?" A lift of the Head's eyebrow.

"I'm sure of it! And nothing excuses his trying to give the College a bad name."

"That's the line I mean to take with him," the Head answered.

The Augurs winked.

* * * * *

A few days later the Reverend John called on Number Five. "Why haven't we seen you before, Padre?" said they.

"I've been watching times and seasons and events and men—and boys," he replied. "I am pleased with the Tenth Legion. I make them my compliments. Clewer was throwing ink-balls in form this morning, instead of doing his work. He is now doing fifty lines for—unheard-of audacity."

"You can't blame us, sir," said Beetle. "You told us to remove the—er—pressure. That's the worst of a fag."

"I've known boys five years his senior throw ink-balls, Beetle. To such an one have I given two hundred lines—not so long ago. And now I come to think of it, were those lines ever shown up?"

"Were they, Turkey?" said Beetle unblushingly.

"Don't you think Clewer looks a little cleaner, Padre?" Stalky interrupted.

"We're no end of moral reformers," said McTurk.

"It was all Stalky, but it was a lark," said Beetle.

"I have noticed the moral reform in several quarters. Didn't I tell you you had more influence than any boys in the Coll. if you cared to use it?"

"It's a trifle exhaustin' to use frequent—our kind of moral suasion. Besides, you see, it only makes Clewer cheeky."

"I wasn't thinking of Clewer; I was thinking of—the other people, Stalky."

"Oh, we didn't bother much about the other people," said McTurk. "Did we?"

"But *I* did—from the beginning."

"Then you knew, sir?"

A downward puff of smoke.

"Boys educate each other, they say, more than we can or dare. If I had used one half of the moral suasion you may or may not have employed——"

"With the best motives in the world. Don't forget our pious motives, Padre," said McTurk.

"I suppose I should be now languishing in Bideford gaol, shouldn't I? Well, to quote the Head, in a little business which we have agreed to forget, that strikes me as flagrant injustice . . . What are you laughing at, you young sinners? Isn't it true? I will not stay to be shouted at. What I looked into this den of iniquity for was to find out if anyone cared to come down for a bathe off the Ridge. But I see you won't."

"Won't we, though! Half a shake, Padre sahib, till we get our towels, and *nous sommes avec vous*."

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The Wild-fowl Decoy

By S. L. Bensusan

Illustrated By A. J. Wall

"THEY be all agoin' to the D'ky."

The words made me turn round sharply, and I saw that the carter had come silently over the misty ploughland, on his way to the cottage from which a faint light shone. I had been sitting patiently for an hour by the side of a rough shelter made of straw and hurdles by one of the lads who scared the rooks, waiting for a shot at the wild-duck as they went to rest. For a long time I had sat listening to the call of partridges in the fields around, watching rabbits peeping cautiously from the hedge, until at last the ducks had passed. There were six, flying closely together, too high for a shot-gun to carry with proper effect, and while I sat staring in the direction of their flight the carter had come upon me. We passed together towards the shooting-box, and as I slipped the cartridges from my gun to their bag, he continued, this time in a consoling vein, "Wait for a sharp snap o' cold, and they'll fly low; there'll be more o' them, too."

"Where do you say they are going?" I asked him, as he left me at my door. "To the D'ky," he answered, "nigh foor mile away."

The nights passed without bringing me any luck, until one evening a hard frost gripped the land and covered the home pond with a thin coat of ice, and then, soon after dusk, and while there was yet light enough for a shot, the ducks passed over again, flying lower than before, and in response to a peremptory summons from the choke barrel, one grey flyer came down to earth with the dull thud so dear to the shooter's ear, while the rest of the flock, with a shrill cry of alarm, passed out of sight in less time than I take to write this line down. Nearly a fortnight's waiting for one bird, while less than four miles away they might be seen by the dozen. I determined to visit the neighbouring Decoy of which the carter had spoken, and see how the supplies of wild-fowl that do not fall to the gun are gathered for the London market. So on the following morning I drove over to the Decoy in company with a man who knows the land. The pond stands no more than five hundred yards from the sea wall, in the middle of a small estate. We put the pony up at the keeper's cottage and walked towards the bank of trees that screens the water from view. Our way lay through fields wherein the second hay crop had been allowed to remain, making, by the natural mixture of old grass and new, excellent grazing land. I realised that I was in a sportman's paradise. Before we had gone a hundred yards we had flushed two magnificent coveys of partridges, each one having more than a dozen birds and being obviously unbroken. The birds were very plump, and their unconcern told us that they had not been shot over. Two or three hares got up almost under our feet and scampered off as though the exercise rather amused them; a few snipe rose from the fleet and twisted their rapid flight at our approach. "From the beginning to the end of the wild-fowl season," said my companion, "you will never hear a gun go off here. The owner does not shoot, and does not let the shooting; he will not even cultivate the fields lying directly round the pond. See," he added, as we reached the corner of the road again, "there is the night-cottage of the keeper, and there he is himself."

We reached the road and caught our first glimpse of the Decoy, with its endless palisade of rushes and long "pipes" stretching

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from the pond itself, and becoming more and more narrow until they terminated in a net rather less than three feet in diameter. There were six of these "pipes," each one protected by the palisades, and stretching away from the pond at regular intervals. Only one can be used at a time, and, as I shall presently show, the wind is the deciding factor in the selection. The keeper came towards us, and at his invitation we entered the little cabin in which he sleeps when the weather is very severe. There we received our instructions and were forbidden to speak or smoke. "If I were to fry a piece of meat here," said our mentor, "fifty yards from the pond, so soon as the smell went into the air the birds would go off." He rummaged about and found three pieces of peat, stuck them on the prongs of as many forks, and lighted them. The pungent, pleasant smell filled the little room. "Now," said the keeper quietly, and in the tone of a man who must be obeyed, "there's a lot of birds in the pond, and I'll get them out while you wait; but you must do as I've told you, and if you forget there'll be no sport for any of you." So saying, he gave a piece of peat to each, and we were told to keep it in front of us. Then we set out in single file to the nearest palisade, following the course of the pipe that lay most directly against the wind. The keeper's trained collie followed at our heels. As we approached the pipe our guide whistled long and softly, and from the water, which we could not see, came a loud answer, the harsh cry of the ducks blending with the curious call of the widgeon. Suddenly the keeper went down on hands and knees behind the palisade, and we all followed suit. I raised my head cautiously to see the cause of the manœuvre, and was just in time to see a dozen wild-ducks circle round the Decoy and then sink down towards the unseen water. The keeper had evidently seen them in the far distance and had whistled. The tame decoy-ducks responded to the cry, their wild companions echoed the cry, and the combined call had brought the other birds down. Clearly we were in the company of a very able man; but before I proceed to describe the taking of the wild-fowl, it would perhaps be well briefly to describe the Decoy.

"We set out in single file."

It is a large pond nearly surrounded by trees, with the six channels or pipes running from it at regular intervals and in ever-narrowing shape, until they terminate in a net. The privacy of the pond is doubly secured, for not only does it stand far removed from human habitation, but it is also surrounded by the rectangular rush palisades that screen it from sight until you

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deliberately step in front of one. The normal possessors of the water are the tame decoy-ducks, who, in return for their treachery, enjoy a very pleasant existence, being well fed and cared for throughout the year. At daybreak, as wild-fowl fly overhead, they see the decoy-ducks and settle on the pond, which is kept free from ice and sheltered from the wind in the worst weather. Wild ducks, widgeon, and teal are the most frequent visitors—a few rare specimens of fowl come now and again, particularly in the severe weather; geese do not come at all. When the keeper finds his decoy well filled his task is to catch the birds. The least noise, the slightest odour would scare every one off, and so the work has to be done most carefully, the keeper's only allies being his tame ducks and his dog.

Let us return to our man, who rose from his kneeling position smiling very contentedly. He moved gingerly along the palisade, and we followed him. At last he reached the end of one pipe, and taking a small stick thrust it into the yielding reeds that screened us. The aperture made was large enough to offer me a bird's-eye view of the pond's surface, and I confess the sight filled me with emotion. Just below me about a dozen widgeon sat on the water motionless. A few yards away a bunch of teal could be seen, while in the middle of the pond were twenty to thirty wild-duck, and on the far sides of the water more teal and widgeon. There must have been nearly a hundred birds on the surface of the water. To the man who has been content to wait for weeks without half a dozen shots, this collection of wild-fowl was bound to appeal; and though I have little or no sympathy with decoys, I could not help feeling excited at the prospects of the capture. The keeper once more blew a long low note on his whistle, and the decoy-ducks and their new-found friends answered it, while the widgeon at my feet, or, to be strictly accurate, the male birds among them, responded with their shrill "*Wheoh*." How welcome that sound is to the man who is out wild-fowl shooting! How he would rejoice to see teal settling down in any place that offered him the chance of a shot! With what delight would he greet the appearance of the mallard! And there they all were, dozens of them within thirty yards, resting, preening, or quarrelling according to their inclinations. The sight was overpowering. I turned away, and the keeper, drawing the stick back, stopped the hole.

"We will come away for about half an hour," he whispered, "and then the birds will be ready to feed, and we can get at them."

So we moved off noiselessly, our interest greatly roused by what we had seen. Our guide took us first to the waterwheel and pumps by which the pond is supplied, and explained how it is necessary to work it from time to time in order to keep the "pipes" full of water. "Mind you," he remarked, still speaking *sotto voce*, "so soon as a wild-fowl feels its feet it will go no further, so if the water in the pipes were not sufficient the birds would never go far enough to get right under the cover of the nets." The water is supplied by a stream that enters the sea close by, but is quite fresh. I noticed that all the banks we passed were positively riddled with rabbit-holes, and the keeper told me that at night the fields were like nothing he ever saw elsewhere. "The master will not have them touched," he said, "until the wild-fowl season is at an end; and as it begins in August they have plenty of time to multiply. So soon as the close time for birds sets in, we take the rabbits by the hundred." We returned to the night cottage, and there the keeper told us of the hardships attaching to the work, of the necessity for getting up soon after midnight in the roughest midwinter weather, to break the ice in the pond, that the birds passing over the frost-bound land at daybreak might find a haven in the Decoy. It was lonely, too, through the long days and nights, when nobody came near the place except the carrier who called daily for the game baskets to take the spoils up to the London market. Yet there was always plenty of excitement, and at times rare birds would visit the Decoy, and the news of their capture would provoke local comment and stray paragraphs in the country Press. So we chatted until the keeper, looking first at the sky, and then at the clock, declared it was time to proceed to business.

He went to a well-filled bin and loaded his pockets with grain. The peat on the forks, that had been allowed to go out, was carefully relighted, and we started out once more. This time we made our way, still in Indian file, to the point where one of the pipes leaves the pond. The width at first is about ten yards, and there is no netting at the edge, though the palisades stretch right along to the final ring at the far end. We had already received final instructions; we now took our places, mine being one that

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enabled me to see, through the tiny hole made by another stick, the whole of the manœuvres. I could not see my friend, and I only caught an occasional glimpse of the keeper, but his work was very easy to follow. So soon as I was in my place I heard the old call, and its prompt response showed that all the birds were on the *qui vive*. It must have been some half hour after midday, and near feeding time, for the tame birds at least.

Into the decoy pond, at the point where the pipes started, a handful of grain fell fluttering down, and at the same time the dog jumped over one edge of the palisade. With a loud quack, indicative of extreme satisfaction, the tame ducks swam from the middle of the pond and began to eat hurriedly. Slowly and without suspicion their wild friends joined in the meal, while the widgeon gathered together at the far end, paddled slowly towards the scene of operations, and a stray moorhen boldly ventured in the direction of some food that had fallen on the edge of the bank. None of the birds seem disconcerted at the presence of the collie. For the moment the teal made no sign, and as the widgeon arrived rather late, the mysterious supplies fell mostly to the decoy-ducks. As though from space, another handful sprinkled the water, this time just inside the pipe, and the ducks instantly showed signs that appetite comes with eating. By this time they were all busy ; the widgeon had some small share of the spoil, the teal began to bestir themselves. Those artless, Judas-like decoy-ducks were now under the big net that spread in ever-narrowing length over the pipe, their companions were edging dangerously near it, there was something like a pressure from the rear. I was reminded of the old days when I struggled outside the gallery doors at opera time, and when, the doors at last being opened, we rushed gladly from the light to the comparative darkness, pushed remorsely by the ever-growing crowd in the rear. Two handfuls, right under the network at last, and a rush of the nearer birds followed, while the collie again jumped over the hurdle as though to teach the decoy-ducks their business. I was by now feeling cramped, I wanted to stand up and stretch my limbs, I was tired of holding the glowing peat in front of me, but I could not bear missing any one of the strange manœuvres. The teal had joined the widgeon and mallard, most of the birds were going under the net. I saw one brace of ducks, a mallard and his mate, hesitate and then swim slowly away, as though warned by some old recollection or conscious of some vague fear. The instinct of these nervous birds is quite remarkable. I knew that the slightest sound, the smallest hint of danger would have sent every bird out of the water, that the teal would have gone like an arrow from a bow, and the rest would have been almost as rapid in their flight, and then I felt a sudden inclination to sneeze. I was standing in long, wet grass, and possibly had taken a chill. In that moment, when the innocent involuntary act that seemed almost inevitable would have spoiled the whole work of the artful fowler, I remembered that strong pressure on the upper lip will generally stop a sneeze. I applied the pressure, and the inclination promptly died away. This was lucky, for the birds were almost immediately in front of me, and I had been quite nervous for the moment. A larger shower of corn than any of its predecessors now sent a series of rippling eddies along the water in the pipe, and in sight of this tempting display there was a big rush. Mallard, widgeon, and teal were all mixed up, eating, calling, splashing, while the innocent decoy-ducks remained well in front and, keeping outside the *mêlée*, ate what came in their way with a calm conscience and healthy appetite. Quite unconsciously the bulk of the birds were under the net ; they had no suspicions, no indication of life other than their own had reached them ; the dog had merely amused them ; clearly they thought he was, at best, a four-legged fool to run about aimlessly on the bank while so much good grain could be picked up on the water. Once more another shower of corn arrived, some way higher up, where the pipe was comparatively narrow and the network was above and around. The decoy-birds rushed forward, the others pursued ; there must have been forty or fifty in the pipe. Someone ran quickly but almost noiselessly past me, and a moment later jumped over the hurdle in the place where the earliest handful of grain had called the wild-fowl to their fate. It was the keeper, who now, for the first time, stood revealed to every bird in the Decoy.

A bunch of teal in the open water rose instantly, and was out of sight scarcely later. Such widgeon and mallard as had not reached the pipe followed suit. The rest, fluttering, quacking, jostling each other, rose too, but the keeper was behind them, the net above and around ; they had no choice but to go forward in hopeless confusion. Only the decoy-ducks remained cool ; they knew their

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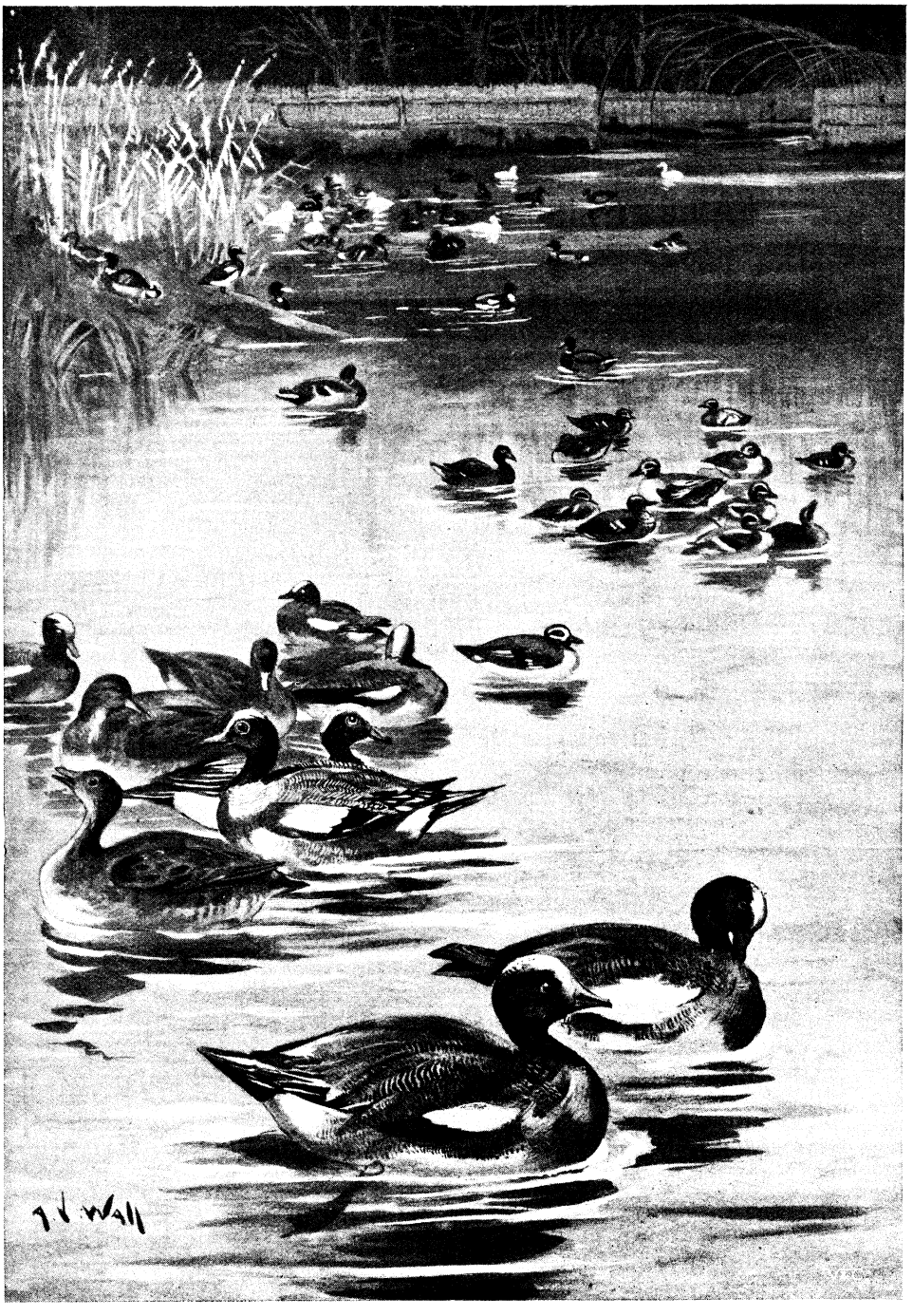

THE DECOY POND.

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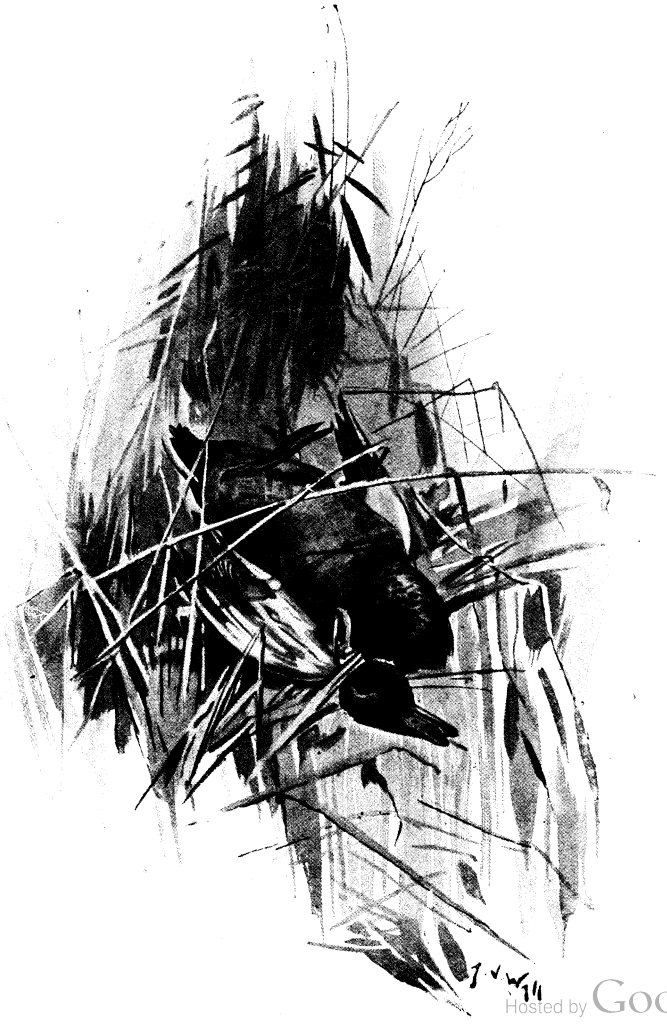
business. Do you remember in "Hiawatha" the description of the capture of the ravens and their king Kahgagee? How nearly the lines apply to the Decoy man :—

He had risen before the daybreak,
He had spread o'er all the cornfields
Snares to catch the black marauders,
And was lying now in ambush.

* * * * *

From his place of ambush came he,
Striding terrible among them . . .
Without mercy he destroyed them,
Right and left by tens and twenties.

Those lines flashed across me as the keeper, having his victims secure in the net, proceeded to the far end, and taking them out one by one performed the happy despatch with a marvellous celerity born of long practice. It was not a pleasant sight, particularly to the man who would rather wait three days to shoot a brace than have a hundred on such terms; but, after all, it is mainly to the decoys that the big markets look for their supplies, and certainly the birds had no time to suffer. Yet as I looked at them later in the day, all lying breast downwards on the floor of the cottage kitchen, and thought of the amount of legitimate sport they represented, I felt sorry for them and more sorry for myself. The keeper told me the net value of the catch was about five pounds, and that the birds would be taken to London on the same evening. I congratulated him on his skill and its result, and then my friend and I retraced our steps and drove home, discussing alternately the brutality of decoys and the prospects of getting back to our own place in time to walk up some partridges before sundown.



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THE SOLDIERS' BISHOP.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE REV. ARTHUR ROBINS, OF WINDSOR.

By James Milne.

Illustrated from photographs by W. H. Bunnett.

"DON'T know the Soldiers' Bishop? don't know Arthur Robins? Well, I'm—blowed!"

You can imagine the fine air of contempt with which a Guardsman would so deliver himself to anybody who needed the rebuke. But, indeed, such a person would have to come from very "furrin parts," for we all know the Rev. Arthur Robins. Not personally, maybe; but certainly by name, and for his work in the interests of Tommy Atkins.

Here is an incident of two troopers of the Household Cavalry, who, with a phalanx of comrades, had one Sunday morning attended Mr. Robins's service at Holy Trinity, Windsor.

"I say," observed the first man, "that was a good sermon the old boy preached this morning. Whyever ain't he a bishop?"

"Whyever ain't he a bishop?" exclaimed the second man. "Why, you fool, ain't he *our* bishop?"

Then, on an occasion when Mr. Robins officiated in St. Paul's, the Dean came to him in the vestry, remarking, "Why, what's the matter? the Cathedral is full of soldiers!" It was full of soldiers of the Household Cavalry, quartered in London, who, hearing that Mr. Robins was to be preacher that evening at St. Paul's, had found their way thither in scores.

You see that the title of the "Soldiers' Bishop" is not an empty one, though no mitre goes with it. If you were to spend an hour or two with Mr Robins, as I did recently, you would also understand why the soldiers of the Household Brigade christened him the "Soldiers' Bishop." My visit arose out of the fact that a little while earlier he had been celebrating his jubilee as the Guardsmen's chaplain at Windsor.

There, gracing his sideboard, was a gift, recording the event, a tantalus presented to him by the warrant and non-commissioned officers of the 2nd Life Guards stationed at Windsor. But, indeed, Holy Trinity Rectory is filled with kindly evidences of the manner in which Mr. Robins's labours have been appreciated by the Household Brigade, officers and men.

"THE BISHOP OF THE HOUSEHOLD BRIGADE."

The Rev. Arthur Robins, M.A., Rector of Holy Trinity, Windsor, Chaplain-in-Ordinary to the Queen, Chaplain to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, and Chaplain to the Household Troops at Windsor.

Merely a word on that Egyptian sword, a relic of Kassassin, but now resting peacefully in the drawing-room. "I'll take this to dear old Robins, at Windsor," a soldier had exclaimed to himself, picking up the weapon on the field of battle. And he did. At the

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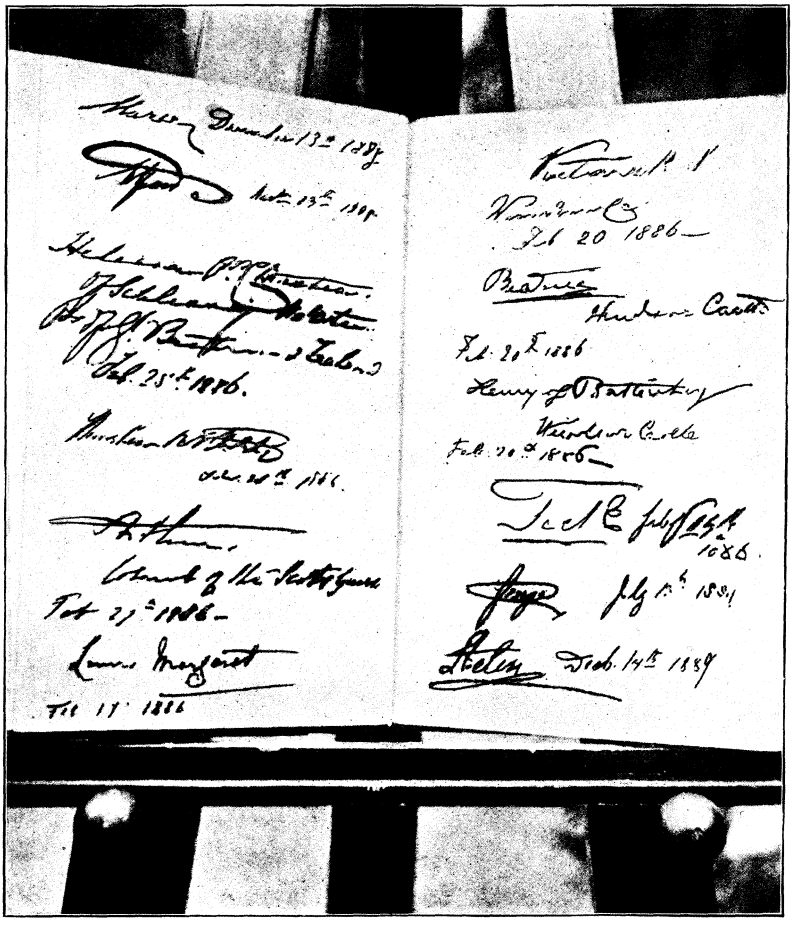
same fight another Life Guardsman wore round his neck a card bearing on one side Mr. Robins's "Soldier's Hymn," and on the other a specially written prayer. Nay, not one soldier only, but many went into the struggle with these charms—as they called them—to give greater strength to their strong right hands. The cards were brought home, war-worn, like their owners, and now they will be hanging here and there, framed and sacred, in the best rooms of ex-Guardsmen's homes.



TWO PAGES FROM THE AUTOGRAPH BOOK PRESENTED BY THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE REV. ARTHUR ROBINS.

Is the "Soldier's Hymn," with its beautiful music, adapted from Rossini, not known in every barracks? The music, of course, occurs in the oratorio, "Moses in Egypt," and Mr. Robins happened to hear it as an accompaniment to a wedding hymn. He thought it would be admirable for a "Soldier's Hymn," and thereupon he wrote the same. Here are the first and last verses:—

To Thee, Almighty Father, these loyal hearts we raise,
With those who march with Jesus upon the life of praise.
By Thee we'll hold the ramparts, no truce with that which harms—
There sounds above the battle, from Thee, the cry, "To Arms!"

Not stricken by the poison of all the darts of sin,
We hold the fort with Jesus, by Jesus we will win.
His colours go before us, they tell of those at rest,
Battalions of our God, brigaded with the blest.

Somehow, while you chat with Mr. Robins, you find your mind running upon that beautiful line in an Irish song, "O Father O'Flynn, you've an excellent way with you." He is just the man to deal with the soldier, to lead him and review him in the spiritual sense. There is no starch about him, no drab cloth and weepers; you at once feel at home in his company, you find inspiration in his robust outlook upon the world. Mr. Robins is the healthy mind in the healthy body, and Tommy Atkins observes to himself, "Yes, he'll do. He's just a human being, like the rest of us."

College, two curacies and two rectorships in the country, then, on the recommendation of Dean Wellesley, to Windsor—that has been Mr. Robins's career in the Church. Bishop Wilberforce and Dean Wellesley had both been his intimate friends, and the former had written to the latter, in effect, "He's just the man for Holy Trinity, with its soldier congregations." The Church as a profession? "In the worldly sense," re-

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marked Mr. Robins, "a man, unless he has great interest, had better be almost anything else than a clergyman, and he should never cut out a line for himself. I have done so in regard to the regeneration of the moral and social status of the soldier, and in regard to the improvement of the dwellings of the poor, and I'm afraid that it has not always been to my personal advantage. However, I feel I have done something which needed doing."

It has always made Mr. Robins angry to think that anybody should despise the soldier or look down upon the soldier's calling. He mentioned to me an experience he had, years back, with a bazaar in the West End of London, which showed this notice, "No servants in livery, dogs, or soldiers admitted." He protested against this proceeding, as an insult to the whole British Army and to the flag which that Army carries round the world.

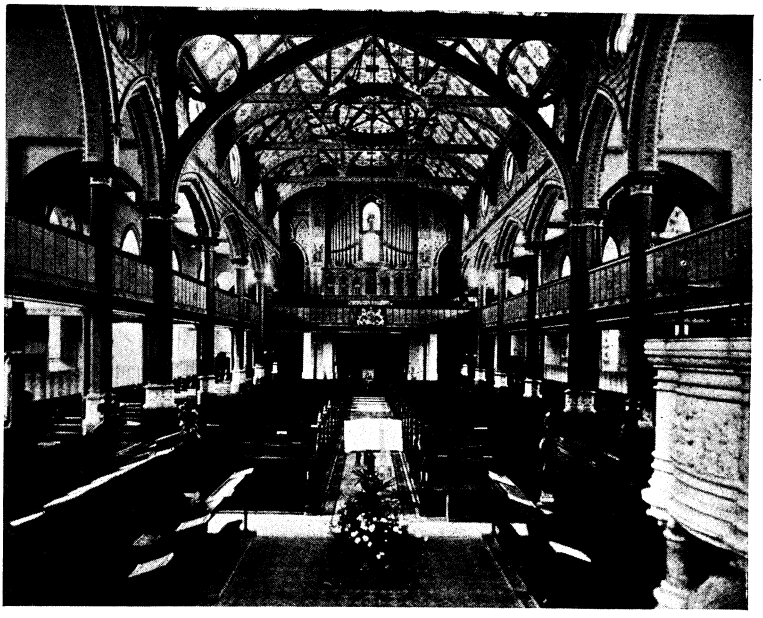
"I'm afraid," observed Mr. Robins, "that Tommy Atkins as a comrade is not very popular in piping times of peace. Then it's, 'Chuck him out,' 'Put out his pipe,' and what any civilian will have it. Tommy is all the rage when he's off to the front, the band playing, 'The girl I left behind me.' Well, I have fought for the absolute, hearty recognition of the soldier as one who is the comrade and the brother—aye, and the equal—of all of us. Parsons have not, perhaps, been always too well understood of the soldier, with notable exceptions, however. I have endeavoured to study Tommy, not only from the pulpit, over the pages of the Bible, but in the mess-room, from the point of view of his 'baccy and his beer.'

"A soldier, rightly comprehended, is a servant of the Queen and nation, made of very solid stuff. Somewhere I once read the statement that Tommy was mostly 'boozing in a state of solution' at the canteen counter. It was a gross libel; it was wrong and it was wicked. If the soldier is scouted as a bad sort he will be quick to show you all his bad qualities. But feel for him—and, above all, don't stigmatise the young fellow who has 'gone for a soldier' as being one of the lost—and you will soon discover what a lot of grit there is in Tommy's rough and ready personality."

Next I asked Mr. Robins to give me a little monograph on the soldier as a human document.

"My experience has taught me," he answered, "that soldiers are very much like other classes. There is among them just the same percentage of the good, the bad, and the indifferent. The real soldier is a downright honourable, sincere, trustworthy fellow, often thoroughly religious. More than one bedside scene could I quote in support of the last statement, scenes of singular tenderness and beauty. A little sympathy extended to a soldier will draw from him more than a proportionate amount of gratitude.

"I doubt if the authorities have an adequate idea of the great patriotic loyalty of the soldier. He yields a ready obedience to discipline, but he is not to be bought and he could not be sold. His loyalty to the Queen in a personal sense is wonderful, it is



HOLY TRINITY PARISH CHURCH, WINDSOR.
Looking West.

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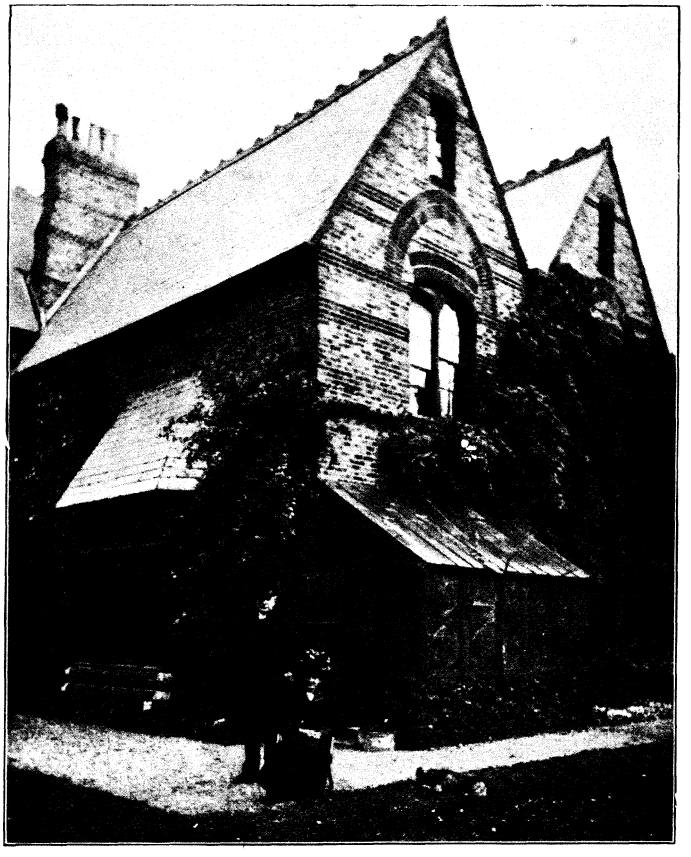
touching, his admiration of her boundless. You will hear all this expressed in such a phrase as 'Dear Old Girl'—soldiers' language, no doubt, but full of respect, reverence, and attachment. Yes, her soldiers have a personal affection for the Queen. Her Majesty chose the texts which are written above the long rows of Guardmen's names in Holy Trinity — Grenadiers, Coldstreams, Scots Guards, who died while on active service in the Crimea. Again, the Queen came to inspect the window which we put up in the church to commemorate her escape from the lunatic who fired at her carriage in Windsor. Also, last year she visited Holy Trinity to see a clock erected in honour of her jubilee. She was to have arrived at seven, and the clock was to have rung out the hour. She did not arrive until a quarter past seven, but we managed to delay the clock so that it might still strike. 'I'm afraid,' she said, laughing, 'that your clock is a little bit slow.'



HOLY TRINITY RECTORY, WINDSOR.

The Rev. Arthur Robins, Miss Gladys Robins, and the dog "Dirk."

"With the soldiers of the Household Brigade," Mr. Robins continued, "the Prince of Wales is wonderfully popular. The same applies to Tommy Atkins in every regiment, but, naturally enough, they 'of the Household' regard the Prince as being theirs in a special degree. He is always a soldier towards soldiers, and a man towards men, and those are qualities which win the heart of T. A. The real, ready, rough-and-tumble soldier wishes to be proud of his calling, and so he is glad to see it honoured by the highest in the land. But he is a man also, and he likes to feel that he is so regarded in the same quarters. The Prince of Wales never receives a salute from a soldier without returning it—not in any slovenly way, either, but accurately, heartily, to the full. At Marlborough House a member of the family—being very young then—found a little difficulty in executing the salute to the sentry. He was sent back to repeat it.

"You should note how the soldiers in Windsor run to the barrack-gates and crowd the balconies to get a glimpse of the Prince of Wales should he come down from London to lunch with the officers. They like him for himself, apart from anything else, and they like the Princess not a whit less. Are there two more charming people in England than the Prince and Princess of Wales? I think not. What surprises one is their kindly memory for those little personal events which are so much in all our lives, but which our most intimate friends sometimes overlook. I was a member of the great crowd which went to Marlborough House to congratulate the Prince and Princess on their silver wedding. Somewhat earlier I had been on the sick list. 'I'm afraid,' said the Princess, 'you have been very ill, Mr. Robins. I hope you are now recovered.' Well, you know, that was enough to make one better on the spot."

Next, the name of the Duke of Connaught

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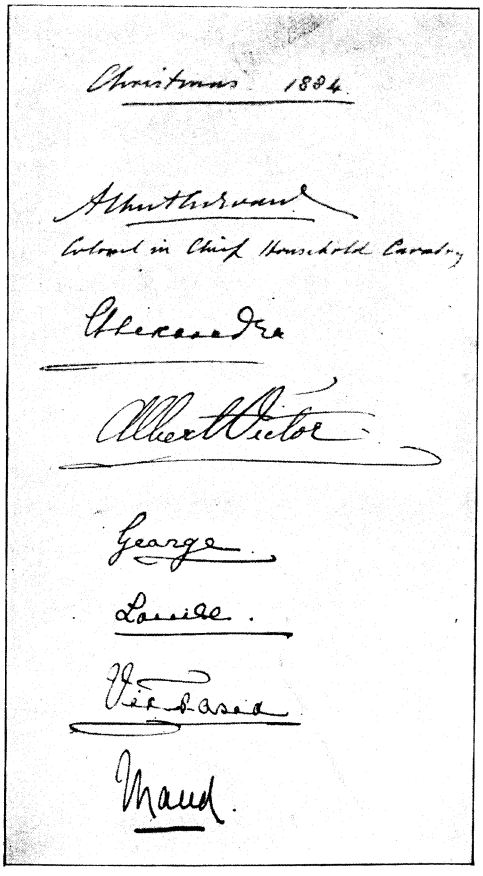
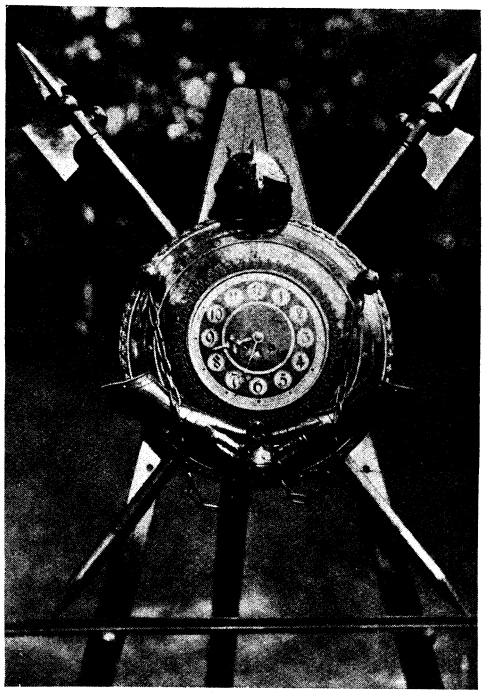
came up, and Mr. Robins declared that as an active general of the British Army he has the unbounded admiration of Tommy Atkins. "I don't merely mean," he added, "that the soldier has a regard for the Duke, as a courteous, kind-hearted member of the Royal Family. He thinks him the thorough soldier that he is, and he would wish nothing better than to have him for leader where the fighting was hardest." The Duke was present at, perhaps, the most remarkable military service which Mr. Robins has conducted in Holy Trinity. This was in 1891, when the Emperor of Germany was paying England a visit.

"The Prince of Wales," said Mr. Robins, "was anxious that the Emperor should witness a service in our church. Accordingly, when he arrived in England he submitted the matter to him, all preparations having meanwhile been put in progress. The 2nd Life Guards and the 2nd Scots Guards were



FIRST PAGE OF AUTOGRAPH BOOK PRESENTED BY THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE REV. ARTHUR ROBINS.



THE BRASS CLOCK
Presented by the Prince of Wales to the Rev. Arthur Robins.

in Windsor, and these were to have been a guard of honour and an escort. The Sunday, however, turned out wet, and the Royal folks had practically to come to church in closed carriages. Besides the Emperor, the Prince of Wales, and the Duke of Connaught, there attended the Duke of Clarence and the Duke of Cambridge. We had two regimental bands which took part in the service, and the scene altogether was supremely impressive.

"Oh, yes, I delivered a sermon—short, as always—and its bearing was very simple. I dwelt on the fact that so many great soldiers had also been in the best sense religious men—the influence religion had exercised on famous warriors. I mentioned the names of some of those—Nelson, for instance—who had been accustomed to appeal to the God of battles as well as to their own knowledge of tactics. When the service had ended I went to the church door to see the Emperor away. He turned to me with the words, 'I didn't know there were such services as this in England. I have never seen such a service before; it's the finest I have attended in all my life.' Later the Emperor sent me his portrait with his autograph on it."

Another time Mr Gladstone, also at the invitation of the Prince of Wales, attended

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service in Holy Trinity. In fact, its rector has had many eminent listeners, but never—well, hardly ever—has he gone beyond his rule of a fifteen minutes sermon. He holds that a preacher may, within a quarter of an hour, give a man as much spiritual fodder as he is able to digest at a sitting. "You can," he put it, "keenly interest the soldier with a short, bright service, but otherwise you run the risk of boring him. Tommy Atkins will join in the singing with a heart and a zest

IN THE DRAWING-ROOM OF HOLY TRINITY RECTORY.

The photographs are of all the Colonels of the Household Brigade, with that of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, Colonel-in-Chief of the Household Cavalry.

not approached by a civilian congregation. He will listen to you while you briefly put before him the points you are anxious he should carry away in his mind. Those points must appeal directly to him, and you must express them in a way which he can understand. For the rest, the soldier is the inveterate enemy of long sermons, and he has my whole sympathy.

"You know on the instant when the attention of your men is beginning to fag. You see it in their faces, you can fancy one comrade saying to another, 'Say, old man, our dinner will be cold pretty soon.' You should stop: you have done all the good you can on that occasion. During the twenty-five years I have been at Windsor I have preached about five thousand five hundred sermons. My sermons are extempore, which fact enables me to keep my eye on my congregation, to follow every ruffle of their thoughts—in fine, to be, as a preacher should always be, in intimate touch with his hearers."

Our military "Bishop," with his wonderful hat of office—his own design, that hat—has, perhaps, more godchildren than any other living man. He triumphs in the thought. Every Guardsman's wife wants her baby to be christened by Mr. Robins, and he has "christening parades" at Holy Trinity. When a regiment happens to be in London its youngest recruits are habitually "kept back" until a move to Windsor arrives. On a single day Mr. Robins christened thirty-two children, all of them

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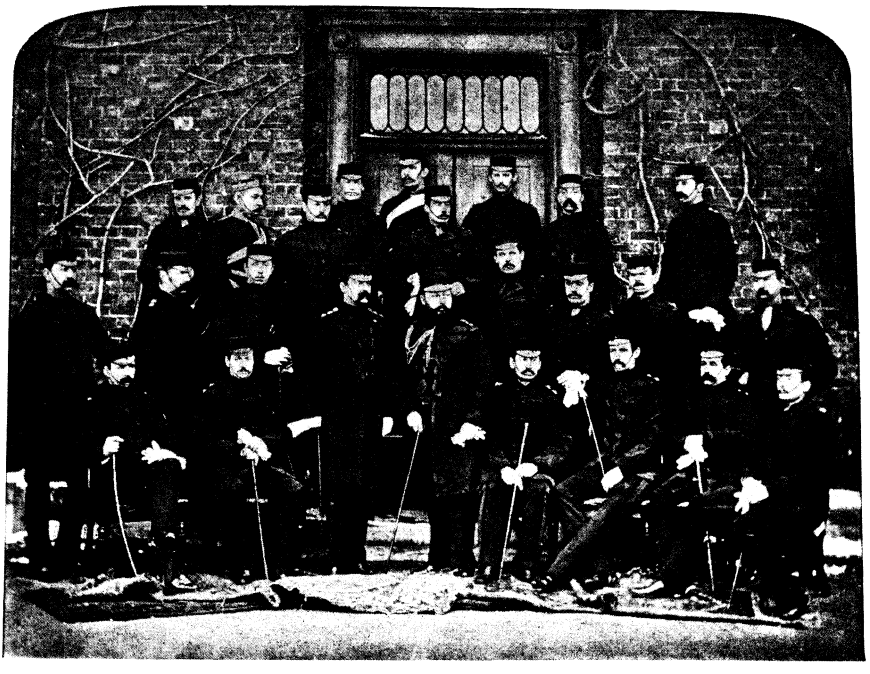
the children of soldiers. A favourite compliment is to name the baby—if a boy—after him, and one fond mother could not see why a daughter of hers should not be called "Arthur Robins Smith," or whatever the surname happened to be. "I don't care," she insisted, "the baby shall be called Arthur or I'll know why?" No doubt the problem was solved somehow.

Within Mr. Robins's experience, the Army, as a profession for the common man, has improved to an extent which warrants high eulogy. Yet there are other improvements which he would wish brought about. He thinks the soldier is not paid as he should be, neither is he pensioned as he ought to be. Then, if a man were discharged from a military hospital as being incurable, what became of him? What, indeed? But the State ought to know. Moreover, Mr. Robins would offer special rewards to non-commissioned officers and men who had proved themselves of unusual value in the service. A colour-sergeant had been half the making of a regiment, from the men's side, yet on leaving he got no more reward than somebody else who had merely fulfilled the conditions of the stripes. Premiums for the very best, and a rise all round for Tommy Atkins, that is the desire of Mr. Robins.

One might write of him and his soldiers, and never go dry, but now an incident of his other great work—that for the poor of Windsor.

"Princess Christian," he told me, "took an active part in the distribution of soup to the hungry children. One day while this distribution was going on the Queen herself drove up. She was greatly amused at the stolid indifference with which the children went forward with their soup. If they spared a minute to look at her Majesty, it was only to return with double activity to the soup—no time was to be lost."



A PRESENTATION GROUP OF THE OFFICERS OF THE 1ST LIFE GUARDS.
H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, Colonel-in-Chief, is in the centre.

Two records, I must, before closing, set down in the story of the "Soldiers' Bishop." As a young man he walked from London to Brighton, with his two brothers, in somewhat under twelve hours. This was a good performance, since he and his companions were wholly untrained; moreover, they covered two miles extra which they might have saved had they been more certain of the road.

Secondly, on a Christmas morning he preached a sermon which was timed as having occupied 2 minutes 58½ seconds. Yet, as the timekeeper conceded, he managed to set forth the whole story of the Incarnation.

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An Idle Moment.

By St. Clair Simmons.

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A SEASIDE COMEDY.

By Muriel F. Hine.

Illustrated by L. Campbell-Taylor.

I DON'T care what you say! I've got my new dress and I shall go——"

"You defy me, then?" the man's voice rang out angrily.

"Yes." She tossed her pretty, fair head, her red lips pouting, one tiny foot planted firmly in front of her from under the frills and flounces of her cool muslin frock—a dainty, mutinous creature, quivering with excitement, mischief, and a subtle sense of triumph.

The man's face darkened; he had been brought up in the school which considers the word "obey" to hold a higher command than either "love" or "honour" in the marriage service, and this was their first real quarrel.

"Very well," he said sternly, "you go without me, then."

The red lips pouted in a smile. "Delighted, I'm sure," she said wickedly.

It was such a ridiculously small affair to squabble about—merely a ball at a house he did not like; and she had been quite ready to give way, but his sudden arbitrary command touched her pride, and she came of a fighting stock, long generations of soldiers before her; so there she stood, drawn up to the full height of her five foot nothing, defiant, fully resolved to hold her own against the tyrant.

He walked to the open window and looked out on to the noisy London square; down below an Italian organ-grinder, hard at work, gazed up and touched his slouch hat meaningly with a pattering demand for alms.

He turned his back impatiently, but kept his eyes carefully away from the dainty, rebellious figure within; had he looked, he might have seen a shade of anxiety creeping over the pretty, child-like face.

"It will be *such* a nice dance," she pleaded suddenly, "and they give a very good supper."

He swore under his breath. "Hang the dance!" and then, visibly ashamed of himself, with an attempt to regain his lost dignity, "I have given you my answer, Norah."

She turned round with a shrug of her pretty shoulders and a flutter of muslin skirts. "And I mine," she said shortly, with studied insolence.

He gnawed at his black moustache and his voice shook with anger. "Then we quite understand one another," he said, as he rang the bell. "Shaw," to the butler who appeared, "tell Johnson to pack my portmanteau."

"Yessir," and the door closed.

She was humming a little French song and making a pretence of arranging some roses in a bowl.

"Going away?" she demanded nonchalantly—then, as a bright idea struck her, "Where shall I forward your letters?"

He paused on the threshold with grave politeness. "There is no need for you to take the trouble," he said suavely, "I will give Shaw directions myself," and the door banged behind him.

She sat down in a little woeful heap on the sofa, regardless of the fresh muslin dress. "Well, I don't call that at all nice," she said at last. "I call it horrid." She rolled the r's in her excitement as only an Irishwoman can, and her eyes filled with tears. "To go away and leave me in the middle of the season, and we've not been married six months!" She pulled out a tiny square of lace and muslin and looked at it doubtfully. "No, I *won't*," she said determinedly, and walked to the door.

"Victorine," she called, "Victor—ine!" and a voice from above responded—

"*Oui, madame, je descends, à l'instant, madame*," and soon mistress and maid were closeted together in earnest conversation in the little pink and white boudoir.

Downstairs in the library monsieur was smoking hard, turning over the pages of a "Bradshaw," and congratulating himself on his heroic firmness, with slight misgivings as to the next move in the game. Go away, if

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only for the night, he must, after the tragic step taken in the drawing-room; but where? that was the question.

He ran his eye down the long list of favourite seaside resorts, until he came to the "L's," where he paused at the name "Lyttleton Sands"—and it flashed across him that only the other day old Colonel Vandeleur at the club had recommended it as a nice, out-of-the-way little fishing town, with a good hotel. He made up his mind at once; there was a train at 5.30. He took out his watch—five o'clock; he must hurry up. So he rang the bell and gave his orders sharply, then walked out into the hall and paused irresolutely at the foot of the stairs. Suddenly a peal of silvery laughter floated down to him. "Heartless!" he muttered between his teeth as he sprang into his hansom; then, as the man put in his portmanteau, "Forward any letters," he said, "to me at the Esplanade Hotel, Lyttleton Sands—do you understand, Shaw?"

"Yessir, pleasant journey, sir," said the old butler, as the hansom rolled out of sight and he turned slowly indoors. "I wonder what's hup," he said to himself, "goin' orf in a 'urry like that! Eh, well, the times are changing"—here his meditations were cut short by a high voice behind him, and turning round he saw the trim figure of the French maid.

"Sorry to interrupt you, Mr. Shaw," she said pertly, "but madam has forgotten ze name of ze master's hotel; was it, *par hasard*, ze Grand?"

Shaw smiled paternally. "No, Mamzelle Victorine," he said, and gave her the full address.

"Tanks," she said saucily, "I did not require more zan ze hotel's name," and tripped away.

A blank look came over the old butler's face. "Now, I wonder," he said, thinking out loud, "if Mr. Nevill meant me to let it out! Well, it's done now, so it can't be helped," and with this comforting reflection he guided his fat person carefully down into his pantry.

CHAPTER II.

A WET, wet day by the sea; nothing but rain, pouring down in great, splashing drops on to the soaking pavements, driving here and there the loose gravel and sand across the dark, shining asphalt of the Esplanade.

A cold wind blew from off the sea and seemed to penetrate through every crack in the doors and windows of the draughty, deserted hotel reading-room, and to Nevill Danby, its only occupant, it looked as if the flood would never stop, as though it had set in for weeks.

The fire, unlit for several months, was smoking hard in a steady spiral against the mirror on the mantelshelf.

Nevill rang the bell furiously.

No response.

Again he tugged at it with all his might, and a waiter appeared. Somehow even he looked damp and depressed, with his oily black hair and mouldy old dress suit.

"Yessir?" he inquired patiently.

"Look at *that!*" said Nevill tragically, as the draught of the swinging door sent a perfect whirlwind of smoke out into the room.

"Yessir," said the man apologetically, "it's always like that, sir," with a menacing glance at the guilty fireplace, "when we gets the wind in this quarter, sir."

Nevill strode out into the hall and went up to the bureau. "Any letters?" he inquired despairingly for the tenth time that morning.

The man hunted through the almost empty pigeon-holes.

"One, sir," he said at last, handing an obvious bill across the counter.

Nevill's face, which had brightened, grew visibly longer. "Where's the drawing-room?" he said abruptly. "I've been driven out of the reading-room by that beastly fire, which does nothing but smoke——"

The man apologised profusely. "You see, sir," he began, "when the wind is in——"

"Oh, yes, I know," said Nevill, hurriedly cutting him short.

He turned over the visitors' book idly. "Am I the only visitor in this hotel?" he asked presently.

"Well, just at present, not being the season, sir, we're not *over* full," the cashier responded with great candour; "but I've just got a wire from town to reserve a first floor suite for a lady and her maid."

Nevill gave a sigh of relief; the deserted *table d'hôte* with the one solitary old lady of the night before had nearly driven him back to town when he thought of the cosy dining-room at home, the attentive Shaw, and, above all, the pretty, piquant face he was accustomed to see smiling at him through a mass of flowers from the other end of the table.

"Have you any books in the hotel?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, sir," was the reply, "plenty in

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the reading-room, sir," and Nevill shuddered as he recalled his experiences of the night before, hunting through the titles in the creaking revolving bookcase for something readable, and visions of endless bound volumes of the *Gentleman's Annual*, top-heavy and ponderous within, rose before his eyes.

He strolled into the drawing-room. By the window sat the solitary old lady, with a large uncomfortable piece of crochet in her lap. The worsted ball had fallen and rolled across the rug, so he gallantly picked it up and handed it to her, but she only bent her head grimly and croaked, "Thank you."

"A very wet day," he suggested feebly.

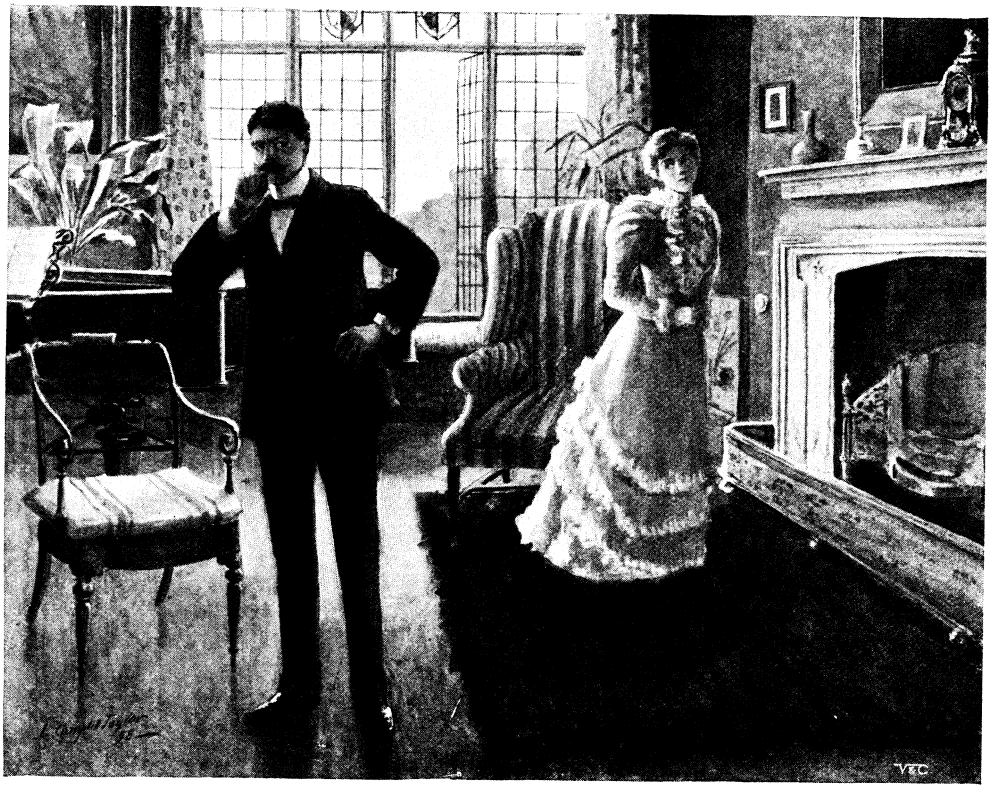
She paid not the slightest attention. Evidently deaf, he thought, and raised his voice. "A *very* wet day," he repeated tentatively, "and horribly cold."

She put her crochet down and took her spectacles off the top of her thin, aquiline nose. "Young man," she said solemnly, "ye shouldna grumble. The Lord will gie us the blessed sunshine in His ain gude time." And then she wiped her spectacles and put them on with a jerk which sent the ball of wool bouncing across the floor.

This time he rose, but made no effort to pick it up. "He can gie ye your ain wool, too," he remarked irreverently under his breath as he retreated before the enemy.

In despair he put on his cap and went out. He had no greatcoat with him, and in half an hour he was soaked through and through.

Not a soul in the streets; it might have been a deserted city. The bathing machines were drawn up in a grim row at the top of the beach, far from the thick, muddy sea. Not a rift in the leaden sky, one dull grey scene: Nevill's teeth chattered and he cursed his folly in leaving town as he thought how cosy and comfortable his wife must be at home.



"'Hang the dance!'"

A solitary coastguardsman was pacing up and down in front of the coastguard station.

"Any likelihood of its clearing?" Nevill asked in his despair. The sailor shook his head. "Not much, sir," he said cheerfully; "it'll last all day, and I shouldn't be a bit

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surprised if it didn't rain all to-morrow. You see, sir," he continued impressively, "when we gets the wind in this quarter——" But Nevill had fled.

He went up into his room to change, and, as he took off one clinging garment after another, he heard an unusual sound of footsteps in the corridor and the bump of luggage being dragged out of the lift.

"Thank Heaven! the lady of the 'A' suite," he said to himself. "I wonder if she'll lunch downstairs," and he dressed himself with quite unusual care.

CHAPTER III.

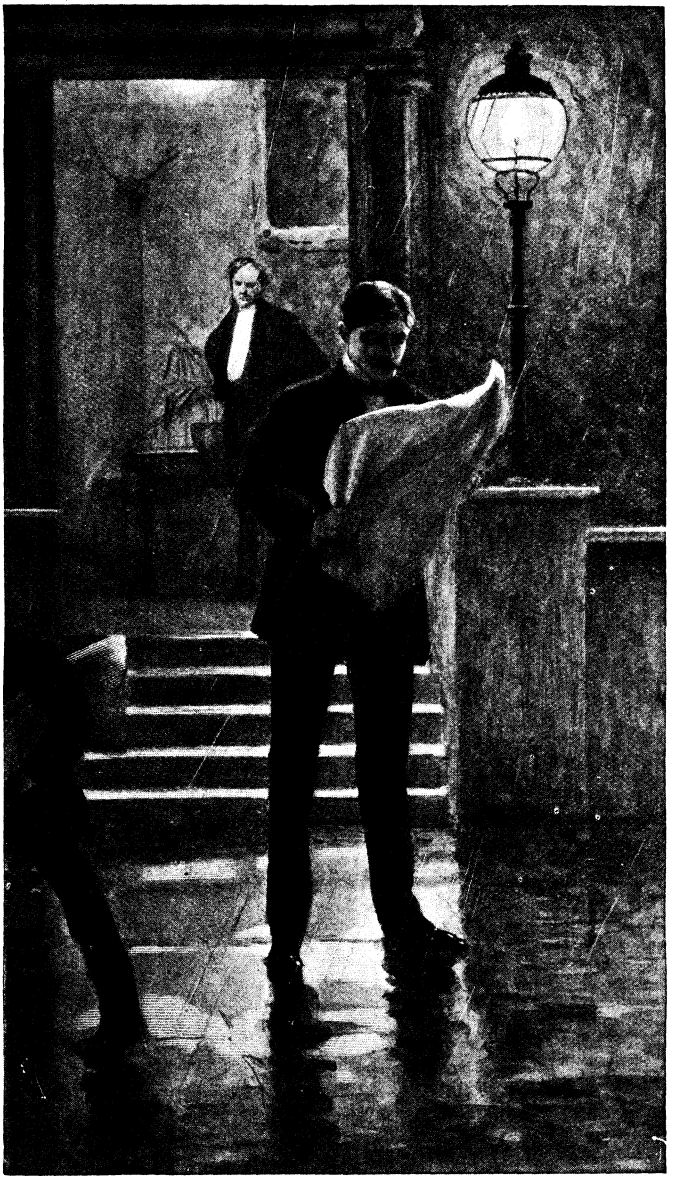
NEVILL'S hopes were doomed to disappointment; the mysterious lady of the "A" suite lunched in her own room, and the rain came down even more steadily than before.

It was past five o'clock, and he had by this time persuaded himself that the stern finger of duty pointed to an immediate return to town. He had already rehearsed in his mind's eye the joy with which Norah would greet him that very evening; how in a few well-chosen words he would forgive her for her unwifely conduct; he would paint for her benefit the picture of the sad and weary day he had endured in silence; the rain, the smoky chimney, and how that irrepressible old Scotchwoman—here he paused as the possibility of that twinkle he had learnt to dread appearing in the deep Irish eyes flashed across him. No, he would suppress the harrowing details and merely sketch the outlines of that dreadful day; and then they would have a cosy evening to themselves, and he would nobly avoid all allusion to the ball of the preceding night.

Here he began to wonder how she had enjoyed it and to vaguely regret he had not been with her.

What a duffer he had been! he admitted at last, with the brush poised dramatically in one hand over his head as he parted his hair absent-mindedly for the third time.

He put the comb down with a sigh, as the picture of his wife, in her dainty muslin frock, pleading with those big grey



"He tore open the pages, sticky with the damp."

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eyes and persuasive voice, rose up before him.

Nay, worse than a "duffer"—he had been a "tyrant." He realised with a shock they had been married barely six months, and he had denied her, from sheer selfishness, the pleasure of that ball. And so she had gone without him. "And quite right, too," he said sternly to himself with the complete *volte-face* of an impulsive nature. He strode across the room and opened his portmanteau with a jerk. He would pack at once and go up by the next train.

As he neared the open window he heard the newsboys calling out the evening papers. "Extra special!" they yelled one after another. He stopped—what was that he heard? "'Orrible panic at a London fire! Thirty ladies burnt in their ball dresses!" Another shrill voice took it up—"Fire at a London ball! titled ladies burnt to death!"

He caught his breath with a sudden awful fear and was downstairs and out of doors before he knew what he was doing. "A special!" he shouted, throwing a shilling at the boy. He tore open the pages, sticky with the damp. Here it was. "Fire at Lady Elise Baring's Ball." He groaned aloud. It was true, then—that was the house! His hand shook till he could scarcely read the short list of victims; the article concluded—"Many other bodies await identification."

He dropped the paper as though it stung him, as the thought came over him again and again that she might be lying there, his dainty Norah.

The rain poured down upon his uncovered head and still he stood there in speechless, hopeless misery. And he had let her go to meet her death alone!

The necessity for action slowly forced itself upon him and he walked back into the hall. "Send a 'Bradshaw' to my room, No. 27," he said to a passing waiter, who stared astonished at his white, haggard face.

He stumbled upstairs and began feverishly to throw one thing after another into the open portmanteau, and then he sat down and picked up the "Bradshaw." He took out his watch. "My God!" the words broke from him involuntarily as he realised that the last up train was gone. It was no earthly use hunting through the pages any more. He would have to wait until 7.15 next morning, and all the while the boys in the street below were calling out hoarsely, with due appreciation of the harrowing event, "'Orrible fire in Mayfair! hidentification of victims!" Scarcely thinking what he did, he left his room and began to pace up and down the long corridor—the gong sounded for *table d'hôte*, and still he strode up and down impatiently.

A door opened at the end of a passage and a woman inside laughed—a light, silvery laugh, and he set his teeth in his pain as it reminded him instinctively of Norah.

Why had he not gone to the ball? He might have saved her life. He shuddered as he pictured the scene, and then drew back as a maid came through the open door and passed quickly by him with light footstep.

"And don't be long, Victorine," said a voice within.

He stopped, spellbound, petrified, then literally rushed up the passage and without a knock or word entered the first room of "A" suite.

On the sofa in the dim evening light lay a girl in a soft pink tea-gown so covered with frills of lace and ribbons that one could scarcely see, half-buried in the soft cushions, a fair, curly head.

She turned herself idly towards the door, "You have made a mistake—this is a *private* sitting-room."

"Norah, Norah!" the cry of intense relief burst from him and in an instant he was kneeling by the sofa holding her in his arms.

"You're crumpling my frock," she said, with an attempt at dignity, and then laughed again, a low, delicious laugh. "So you *did* miss me, after all," she said triumphantly; then, touched by her husband's evident emotion, she put her arms round his neck and whispered with a pretty penitence—"I didn't go to the ball—I couldn't without you—I just stayed in and moped—and then to-day I came here. Sure, I meant to meet you casually on the front, but the rain! oh, the *rain!*" She was sitting up now, her eyes twinkling with merriment, blissfully unconscious of the danger she had escaped. "I asked the waiter, and then I asked the hall porter, and last I asked the manager, and they *all* said—here she dropped her clear voice into a husky, apologetic imitation of the speakers—"Well, you see, marm, *when* we gets the rain in this quarter——"

But Nevill stopped the sentence with a kiss.

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Nature's Mirror.

PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDY BY PERCY LANKESTER, TUNBRIDGE WELLS.

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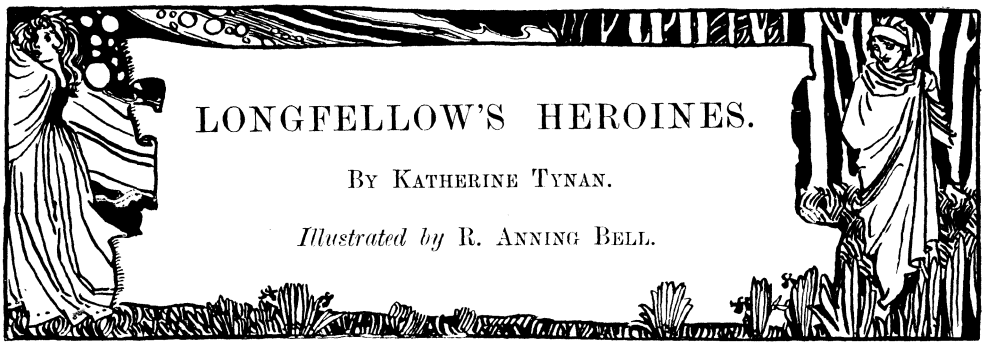

LONGFELLOW'S HEROINES.

By Katherine Tynan.

Illustrated by R. Anning Bell.

WHEN Longfellow died he left behind him a fame as exquisite as Hans Andersen's. The one is the beloved of the children of the world; the other the greatly beloved poet of a vast crowd of women. Fastidious and much-read people may outgrow his simplicity; they want the problems that vex, the passions that disturb them, to look back at them again from their poets' pages. He is too simple for an opiate to their restlessness, as the simplicity of a more consummate artist might be. His gentle optimism, his tender sadness, alike, are worlds away from the nervousness that is in the air. But he has just what I am sure he would have chosen of all audiences, young girls and gentle women of simple experiences, who give him alike their love and their tears. To these, Shelley, Keats, Browning, Rossetti, would speak in strange tongue; the innocent pensiveness, the placid purity of Longfellow's poetry touches them to the heart. Such poetry could only have come from a most gentle and unsullied soul, from a life the sorrows of which had no touch of tragedy, and left no scars as of fire, but, rather, gentle rains to water the roots of the virtues. Even his metres are placid and soothing. One recalls a score of them, how they go—

> Pleasant it was, when woods were green,
> And winds were soft and low,
> To lie amid some sylvan scene,
> Where, the long drooping boughs between,
> Shadows dark and sunlight sheen
> Alternate come and go.

Or—

> Stay, stay at home, my heart, and rest;
> Home-keeping hearts are happiest,
> For those that wander they know not where
> Are full of trouble and full of care;
> To stay at home is best.

That is the music, like a singing burn on a summer day; *that* the philosophy, the simple, natural pleasures, and the home-keeping heart that has neither adventures nor shipwreck. One gazes through the clear brown waters and sees below the silver sand. It is sweet so, with another sweetness than that that sets the heart beating for emprise or adventure.

An American minor poet, with a distinct and exquisite gift within its limits, has sung of Longfellow as—

> Poet of spirits crushed and hearts downcast,
> Loved of worn women who, when work is done,
> Weep o'er thy page in twilights fading fast.

I am sure he would have chosen no fairer renown. One does not imagine him as the poet of prosperous women with full lives of love and maternity. Rather the poet of young girls, standing on the brink, like her of his poem, and of women who have relinquished, or left behind, the joys of life without losing its sweetness. Such women a score or thirty years ago would have read Mrs. Hemans, or that far less excellent person Mrs. Sigourney. They are happier now, with their Longfellow held to the light in dying sunsets, in a poet full of gracious gifts of sympathy, of pensive tenderness, of melancholy alluring as that of autumn fields. His horizon is always, perhaps, a little narrow, his skies low and brooding; but then one is in a little field, and safe from the unknown, and the great distances, and heaven is near.

His ideal of women is a very saintly one. They are all saints in their different ways. Preciosa, in her tender meekness towards her lover, who has believed evil of her, and towards the profligate who would work her ruin; Evangeline, a domestic saint, with her home duties and her life of cares and prayers; Elsie—but she is the most unusual of the three, being one knows not whether driven by earthly love or heavenly, or love as impersonal as that of the angel guardians. These are his three principal women, and perhaps a fourth is Priscilla, the Puritan maiden. Outside the dramas, women have

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little to do with the action of his poems; they are not often the heroines of the short poems. It is only in the two dramas, in a long dramatic poem like "Evangeline," or in "Miles Standish," that he lets them at all explain themselves, and does not say, "See, she is beautiful!" as of a flower or a bird. His women are always beautiful and good.

PRECIOSA

His was a world in which dwelt no sin, and ugliness had no place. More than anyone else one thinks of, he kept the innocent heart of a happy child. The years but gave him that touch of pensive sweetness that endears him to the lonely and those whom the world counts as failures. Seldom does he get the touch of unexplained wistfulness that is in such a poem as that with the refrain—

A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.

The Preciosa of the "Spanish Student" is a gracious creature, and has a womanly strength of faith and patience that makes her shine by her lover, who is not a strong man—not even passionate in his jealousy, or he would have killed the Count de Lara—and too much given to lapses into pedantry in the midst of his love-making. In the first scene, the balcony scene, she is as loving as Juliet, without the passion of Shakespeare's girl. But this is beautiful in its gentle way, and better understood of the many, to whom Juliet would seem remote as the inhabitant of some warm planet nearer to the sun. I am sure that, to the majority of modest and diffident English-speaking women, the passion of Juliet, daughter of the South, must seem so indecorous as to be rather horrifying. Preciosa sighs from her balcony like a gentle air—

How slowly through the lilac-scented air
Descends the tranquil moon! Like thistle-down
The vapoury clouds float in the peaceful sky;
And sweetly from yon hollow vaults of shade
The nightingales breathe out their souls in song.

How different from Juliet's unashamed love, for which she makes pathetic excuse—

But trust me, gentlemen. I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.

I suppose a balcony scene always suggests that in "Romeo and Juliet," or else one would not fall to a task so ungrateful as measuring Preciosa by the standard of the lovers of all time. She is a sweet woman, in this scene with her lover, and charming enough to have silenced on his lips the priggish speech, in which he declares—

What I most prize in woman
Is her affections, not her intellect!
The intellect is finite; but the affections
Are infinite, and cannot be exhausted.
* * * * *
But if thou lovest,—mark me! I say lovest,
The greatest of thy sex excels thee not!

One has need to be uncritical of such a speech in a lover's mouth. Victorian strikes a truer and more personal note when he goes on—

In that stillness
Which most becomes a woman, calm and holy,
Thou sittest by the fireside of the heart,
Feeding its flame.

It was the license of the poet made Longfellow select a Spanish gipsy for his heroine, and dower her with the qualities of the women with whom his own life was passed—good and gracious women, descended from a

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long, unsullied line of folk as happy and holy as themselves. He did not think it necessary to give her one flash of passion or vehemence to show her race. True, she turns out in the end the long-lost daughter of a nobleman; but this is a transparent device, the thinnest of conventions. Her lover, at times, says the noble thing of her—

The angels sang in heaven when she was born.
She is a precious jewel I have found
Among the filth and rubbish of the world.
I'll stoop for it; but when I wear it here,
Set on my forehead like the morning star,
The world may wonder, but it will not laugh.

Preciosa shows a tender heart, full of charity, in the scenes with Angelica, with her reputed father, and, last of all, with the Count de Lara. With the last she is almost too pitiful, I think. I doubt that a woman could present us a woman in poetry, who, passionately loving another man, could feel tender compunctions over the soul of her would-be seducer in the very hour he has forced himself into her presence. It is a man's mistake of making a woman's goodness take the wrong turn. In the scene when Victorian breaks upon her interview with the Count de Lara, both Preciosa and her lover are somewhat lifeless. I like her gipsy lover better on the whole, who, having killed the man that wronged her, answers her "Whence comest thou?" with—

From the rough ridges of the wild Sierra,
From caverns in the rocks, from hunger, thirst,
And fever! Like a wild wolf to the sheepfold
Come I for thee, my lamb.

It is finer than Victorian, in the public place, thanking the Count de Lara for his "courtesy and frankness." The one man of our day who really knew a woman wrote out of his heart of knowledge when he cried to the dead woman who had been the wife of another man—

Why, better even have burst like a thief,
And borne you away to a rock for us two.
In a moment's horror, bright, bloody, and brief,
Then changed to myself again—"I slew
Myself in that moment; a ruffian lies
Somewhere: your slave, see, born in his place!"

Elsie, of the "Golden Legend," is by far his most distinct and unconventional type of womanhood—no saint of a stained window, but a living saint with a passionate woman's need of sacrifice. By her,

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too, the man shows poorly, and it is ill throwing the fault of his cowardice and selfishness on Lucifer's shoulders. All that part of the poem which shows us Elsie in her parents' house is exquisitely idyllic, from the talk of the children onward. It is Longfellow at his sweetest in the passage where they tell the Prince's benefactions—

MAX. I love him because he is so good,
And makes me such fine bows and arrows,
To shoot at the robins and the sparrows,
And the red squirrels in the wood!
BERTHA. I love him, too!
GOTTLIEB. Ah, yes! we all
Love him from the bottom of our hearts;
He gave us the farm, the house, and the grange,
He gave us the horses and the carts,
And the great oxen in the stall,
The vineyard, and the forest range!
We have nothing to give him but our love!

I am not sure, though it is happiest, that it is artistic, after all, to make Elsie marry her Prince. She was scarcely of the texture of mortal maids and matrons—liker, indeed, the Cecilias and Barbaras and Dorotheas, who were not for earthly lovers. Their love scene at the end is beautiful enough. Altogether, "The Golden Legend" must be taken as the poet's finest achievement.

"Evangeline," as well as "The Courtship of Miles Standish," is weighted by the hexameters that Longfellow loved. To a great extent Evangeline and Priscilla resemble each other; the one is Catholic, the other Puritan, that is all, save that Priscilla is the more adventurous. One could imagine them changing places without any great difficulty. The two were women born for all manner of

EVANGELINE

BERTHA. Did he give us the beautiful stork above
On the chimney-top, with its large, round nest?
GOTTLIEB. No, not the stork; by God in heaven,
As a blessing, the dear white stork was given;
But the Prince has given us all the rest.

But the most beautiful passage of all is that in which Elsie reveals her devotion. If she were another woman, and not a saintly peasant child, to whom the Prince was as high and great as anything of earth could be, even without her love, she would have known that though it were well for her to make the sacrifice, it would be ill for him to receive it. However, the passionate martyr's heart carries one over all difficulties.

This whole scene, with the girl, shadowy in the moonlight, standing white-gowned, barefooted, by her parents' bed pleading for her death, is singularly perfect and lovely.

sweet domesticities. In poor Evangeline's case the happiness went astray, while Priscilla had and seized hers. In this way Evangeline is all sadness, Priscilla as merry as one may be in Puritan demureness; but *au fond* both women are much the same, each dutcous in household observances, each doing her duty in the state of life in which God has placed her. This is Evangeline—

Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers.
Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn by the wayside,
Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade of her tresses!
Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the meadows.
When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noontide
Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair in sooth was the maiden.
Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell from its turret

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Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his hyssop
Sprinkles the congregation and scatters blessings upon them,
Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads and her missal,
Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-rings
Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an heirloom,
Handed down from mother to child, through long generations.

And again, in the household—

Close at her father's side was the gentle Evangeline seated,
Spinning flax for the loom, that stood in the corner behind her.
Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest its diligent shuttle,
While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like the drone of a bagpipe,
Followed the old man's song, and united the fragments together.

* * * * *

Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed on the hearthstone,
And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the farmer.
Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline followed.
Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the darkness,
Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of the maiden.
Silent she passed through the hall, and entered the door of her chamber.
Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of white, and its clothes-press
Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were carefully folded
Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline woven.
This was the precious dower she would bring to her husband in marriage,
Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her skill as a housewife.

Now here is Priscilla, as we first see her in the poem—

So through the Plymouth woods John Alden went on his errand.

* * * * *

Heard as he drew near the door, the musical voice of Priscilla
Singing the Hundredth Psalm, the grand old Puritan anthem,
Music that Luther sang to the sacred words of the Psalmist,
Full of the breath of the Lord, consoling and comforting many.
Then, as he opened the door, he beheld the form of the maiden
Seated beside her wheel, and the carded wool like a snowdrift
Piled at her knee, her white hands feeding the ravenous spindle,
While with her feet on the treadle she guided the wheel in its motion.
Open wide on her lap the well-worn psalm-book of Ainsworth,
Printed in Amsterdam, the words and music together,
Rough-hewn, angular notes, like stones in the wall of a churchyard,
Darkened and overhung by the running vine of the verses.
Such was the book from whose pages she sang the old Puritan anthem.
She, the Puritan girl, in the solitude of the forest,
Making the humble house and the modest apparel of home-spun
Beautiful with her beauty, and rich with the wealth of her being!

PRISCILLA.

So he entered the house; and the hum of the wheel and the singing
Suddenly ceased; for Priscilla, aroused by his step on the threshold,
Rose as he entered, and gave him her hand, in signal of welcome,
Saying, "I knew it was you, when I heard your step in the passage;
For I was thinking of you, as I sat there singing and spinning."

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They are both women for all sweet domestic uses, both of a strong religious sense, yet Evangeline is far the gentler; perhaps because on her lies the shadow of her great sorrow, while the other girl is in the light of coming joy. Evangeline is more Longfellow's type of saintly woman. His type is the Catholic one, and not at all the Puritan. Priscilla, no doubt, was as devout a woman, in her way, as Evangeline, though far less the nun. Perhaps she would never have lost her Gabriel, or failed to track him in all those heavy years of hope deferred that have caused so much gentle weeping. Priscilla differs in so much from Evangeline and Preciosa that she is not gentle enough to let her love slip through her fingers; but she is the domestic woman all the same, and very much a man's type, as all Longfellow's women are. "Evangeline," I suppose, is the most popular of his poems, infinitely and for ever heart-touching to those who see their own sadness and failure mirrored in hers, or who, at the threshold of life and love, are much in love with melancholy.

There is no other very distinct woman in the poems — none who takes a much more concrete shape than the maiden with the meek brown eyes, or blue eyes, as the case may be, of the earlier poems. "The Golden Legend," one of the least popular of his poems, seems to me his finest achievement. Perhaps it was inevitable from his enormous popularity that his best should be his least known and praised. At all events, he was dowered with the love of love; a genius of sympathy was his; and if one were to measure his intellectual height by that of other poets, he would be found, by most of us, to reach "as high as my heart."

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THE DEATH THAT LURKS UNSEEN.

By J. S. Fletcher.

Illustrated by Hounsom Byles.

CHAPTER I.

MR. LAZAROFF, TRAVELLER.

ABOUT seven o'clock in the evening of the 21st of October, 188–, I landed at Hull from Rotterdam with a few shillings in my pocket and no apparent prospect of replacing them when they should have been spent on bare necessaries. A week earlier I had sailed from the same port in order to make personal application to a commercial house in Antwerp, with whose manager I had been in communication for some little time previously. I had found it difficult to obtain suitable employment in my own country, and, as I possessed a good knowledge of French and German, it seemed to me that I might try my luck in some of the commercial centres of the Continent. I heard of a house which was in want of an English correspondence clerk, and after some negotiations by letter I determined on running over to Antwerp in order to settle matters definitely. I had an idea that if I presented myself in person I should have more chance of success than by writing a score of letters. Here, however, I was mistaken, for, after waiting two days for their decision, I was informed that the proprietors had decided upon engaging the services of another applicant.

It would have been folly to have remained in a strange country with no expectations and with such a small amount of money as was then in my possession, and I accordingly resolved to return to England at once. I bitterly regretted the loss of the two or three pounds which had been expended on my journey, and was only comforted by remembering that I had spent them in an honest endeavour to find work, and that I might have been successful after all, in which case the money would have been well laid out. But this thought, though all very well in theory, was anything but satisfactory when it came to be reduced to practice, for the fact remained that there I was in Hull with just five shillings and sixpence in my pocket, and no immediate prospect of earning more when that insignificant sum was spent. I walked away from the wharf in no pleasant or enviable mood, and I am afraid I almost encouraged myself in dark and gloomy thoughts. I remember wondering, with a sort of grim, cynical humour, how it was that a young man of two-and-twenty, strong, healthy, fairly well educated, and with three years' knowledge of commercial life, should find it so very hard to get on. I had then been six months out of work, owing to the failure of a company under which I had held a clerkship, and I had exhausted all my small savings in endeavouring to find a new post. As I turned my last few shillings over I wondered if any stroke of good fortune would enable me soon to replace them with others. It would have to be soon, for I had absolutely no resources. I had sold or pledged most of my small belongings in order to raise my expenses from Leeds to Antwerp, and if I meant to return to Leeds that night from Hull a third-class ticket would cost almost the whole of my remaining capital. Yet what was there to do in Leeds if I returned? Why not remain in Hull over night, and have a look round in the morning? There were shipping offices there, mercantile offices, merchants' houses; surely I could find some employment amongst so many opportunities. It was worth attempting, at any rate; and I accordingly turned away from the station and retraced my steps towards the docks, intending to find some third-rate hotel where I could obtain cheap quarters for the night.

I was not very well acquainted with Hull at that time, but I remember passing along Whitefriargate and turning off to the right by a narrow street which led towards the great church in the market-place. It was very quiet there, for most of the houses seemed to be business establishments, and were closed for the night, and there were few people about. I walked along until I came to the back of the church. The wide piece of ground behind the west door was tenantless, but as I crossed it I saw the figure of a man running hither and thither with quick, restless movements, as if he were

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a hound that seeks eagerly for the recovery of a lost trail. As I drew nearer to him I perceived that he ran with his head to the ground, for all the world like a dog that sniffs the wind, and I heard him muttering and talking to himself. He suddenly caught the sound of my footstep, and on the instant he stood erect, with his head slightly inclined to his shoulder, as though to listen. There was a lamp some thirty yards away, and as I crossed its thin stream of light he saw me. With a bound he was on me and had seized me by the lapels of my coat before I could put up an arm to keep him off. I uttered an angry exclamation and would have shaken him off, but he stopped me with a gesture.

"No—no—no!" he cried. "I would not hurt you—I am not a robber. But tell me you have found it—you have found it, eh? I will give you—oh, any reward that you ask—only say you have found it!"

I had taken a good look at this strange creature as he spoke. The faint lamplight showed me a tall, gaunt man of middle age, with fierce eyes gleaming from under an old hat, and a long, straggling beard of dead black hue flowing about his chest. I took him at first glance for a madman, and shook off his arm.

"Let go!" I said roughly. "I haven't found anything."

"You swear it?" he cried. "But I lost it hereabouts—it must have been hereabouts!"

And he began to hunt again, circling round me like a terrier that smells a rat. I felt my curiosity rising.

"Look here," I said, "what is it you've lost? If you've really lost something, and it's so very valuable, I'll help you to find it. But I can't do that unless you tell me what it is, you know."

The man came back to my side, evidently trying to master his emotion. He lifted his shabby hat and I saw great beads of sweat lying thick on his forehead. He pulled out a handkerchief—a great red cotton affair—and rubbed it over his face.

"Pouf!" he said, "I am losing my head—I am almost beside myself. I have lost a small parcel, a package, about as big as that"—he indicated the size with his hands—"and it is of the greatest importance that I should recover it. I had it safe over yonder"—he pointed to the east corner of the church, where it abuts on the market-place—"but when I came to the mouth of the street there"—he indicated the street which I had just left—"it was gone. It must be somewhere between those two points. I think I lost my head a little when I found it had disappeared," he said, smiting his forehead. "I have been running up and down—I must look systematically."

"Well, I'll help you," I said, feeling somewhat curious. "Just a little package, you say, about that size?"

"Just a little box of that size, tied up in brown paper. Find it, my dear sir, and I'll—ah, you shall be rewarded, I promise you."

"Show me what line you took in coming across here," I said, "and then I will go one way while you follow the other. If you lost it in this square, it can't be far out of your line of march."

"I came straight from yonder corner," he said, pointing towards the market-place, "round the church there, and straight across here towards that lamp-post. I had it at the corner; when I reached the lamp-post it was gone."

I bade him go back to the corner and examine the ground carefully, while I returned towards the lamp-post. The light was dim and it was difficult to see anything on the flagged pavement, and ere I had gone many steps I had to have recourse to a box of matches which I happened to have in my pocket. Oddly enough, as I struck the first match and stared at the little belt of light which it made, my eyes fell on the man's package, lying close to my feet. I laughed at the vagaries of luck, and then, without troubling to pick it up, turned and gave a shrill whistle. The strange man was not thirty yards away, and on the instant he came running to my side. I struck another match.

"Is that your box?" I said, indicating the parcel at my feet. Now, if I had been struck by the man's behaviour and demeanour previously, I was simply astonished by his conduct when his eyes fell on the insignificant-looking little package revealed by the light of the match. He clutched at it as a hungry dog snatches at a bone, and hugged it to his breast with such a sigh of relief as I had never heard. Then, just as the match flickered and went out, I heard him gasp, and he grasped my arm and leaned his weight upon me. For a moment I thought he was going to faint, but he presently revived and stood erect again, though he still panted for breath. When he next spoke I scarcely recognised his voice; its tones had changed from nervous fear to extreme politeness.

"I am more obliged to you, sir, than I

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"'Is that your box?' I said, indicating the parcel at my feet."

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can well say," he said. "Pardon this momentary indisposition. I have passed through a very trying experience, and I fear my nerves are not what they once were. I shall be better presently. Do you mind giving me your arm across the square towards yonder lamp?"

Somewhat dubious, but undoubtedly inquisitive, I gave him the help he asked for, and we walked slowly to the street corner which I had left some ten minutes previously. There my companion paused, and in the full light of the lamp looked me carefully over, while I as carefully scrutinised him. I then found him to be a man of forty or forty-five years of age, tall, swarthy, black-bearded, keen of eye, and dressed in a large flowing cape of dark cloth, which completely enveloped him. Not an Englishman, I decided; and yet his English was perfect, and had no suspicion of a foreign accent in it.

"I spoke of reward just now," he said, when he had completed his inspection of me; "but, really, I scarcely know in what form to offer it to you. Of course, I couldn't see what you were in the dim light over there."

"Oh, never mind," said I, laughing. I couldn't help thinking that he was trying to get out of his promise. "That doesn't matter at all. Glad you've found your lost property. Good night."

I was moving away, but he laid a hand on my arm.

"Stop," he said, "you don't go like that. If you had any idea of what a service you have done me—will you come and share my supper?" he said, suddenly interrupting himself.

I reflected for a moment. Surely, I thought, there could be no harm in accepting the man's invitation. It would save my own pocket.

"Thank you," I said. "I shall be very pleased to do so."

"That's all right," he said. "Come—I am staying at the Station Hotel—you won't mind walking there with me?"

"Oh, not at all," said I.

"Perhaps we had better introduce ourselves," he said, as we turned into Whitefriargate. "I am Melchior Lazaroff."

There was something in the way he pronounced his name that made me think he must be some person of distinction. But the names were unknown to me; they were certainly strange to the commercial world, whatever they might be to the worlds of science, or art, or letters.

"My name is Stephen Merrill," I said.

"Well, Mr. Merrill, you have done me a great service. I perceive that you do not know me by name. You will know more of the name in a week or two. I have just returned to Europe from one of the most important explorations of Central Australia that has ever been attempted."

"I am afraid I am very ignorant," I answered. "But I have really been too much engaged in my own affairs lately to read the newspapers—except the advertisement columns," I added, with a grim laugh.

He gave me a keen look.

"Oh!" he said. "Well—you shall tell me all about that over our supper. Excuse me—I mean quite well by you—are you down on your luck, as you English say?"

"Pretty well so," I replied.

Mr. Lazaroff rubbed his hands.

"I'm glad chance threw you in my way," he said. "You've done me a greater service than you imagine, and I hope I shall be able to do something for you. But here we are at the hotel; I shall take you up to my room at once, and we will have a wash while supper is being served."

I perceived that the servants of the hotel knew Mr. Lazaroff, and had much respect for him. He divested himself of his sweeping cloak and shabby hat in the hall, and revealed a well-knit figure clad in a much-worn grey suit. If you had met him in the street, and judged him by his clothes, you would have said that he was either very poor or very rich. A poor man would have worn such clothes from necessity, a rich man might wear them from choice or whim, secure in his own position. I gathered that my host was a rich man; the bowing and subservient satellites who waited upon us at the hotel would not have paid so much attention to a poor one. Nor would a poor man have been able to afford such a meal as we presently sat down to. There were dishes of which I had never heard, and wines of which I had often heard but never tasted. I had fared somewhat poorly on board the Rotterdam steamer, and it suddenly dawned upon me, as I sat down to supper with Mr. Lazaroff, that I was ravenously hungry. I eyed the good fare with favour and felt thankful that I had been able to do my host a service.

We supped in a small private room, and during the meal our conversation was chiefly of Mr. Lazaroff's travels. He appeared to have travelled in all quarters of the globe, and had amassed much out-of-the-way know-

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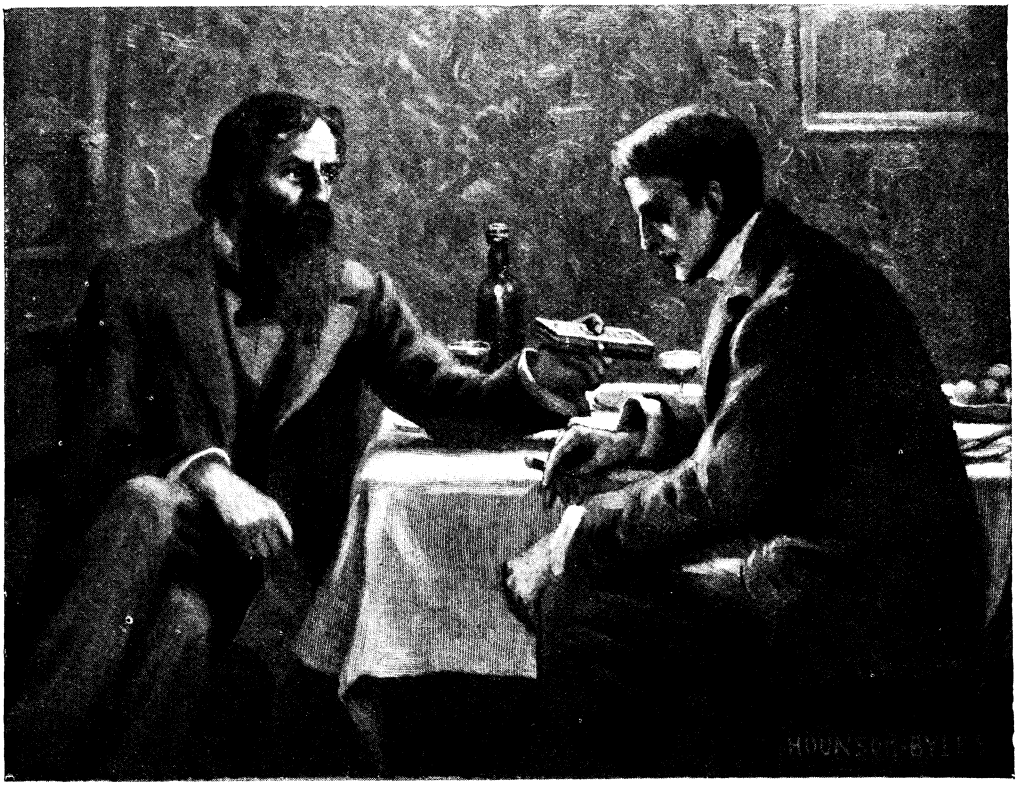
ledge which to me was curious and interesting. A more entertaining table-companion I had never met, and I was genuinely sorry when the meal came to an end. We turned to the fire, and my host offered me a cigar which proved to be of an exceptionally fine brand. For a few minutes there was silence; then Mr. Lazaroff turned to me and with a peculiar smile said—

"I daresay you're curious to know why I made so much to do over the loss of my little box to-night?"

Mr. Lazaroff did not hand it to me for closer inspection; he held it towards me and watched me narrowly while I gazed at it.

"That's very beautiful," I said. "I don't wonder you were concerned at thinking you had lost it. What is the material?"

"Porphyry. A beautiful piece of work, is it not? But it is not the little box itself, my dear sir, which is of such value; it is its contents. But even they are only valuable to me. However"—he replaced the porphyry box in its various wrappings—



"Mr. Lazaroff held it towards me and watched me narrowly while I gazed at it."

"I am, rather," I answered.

"You shall see the box," he said, and produced the brown paper package from the bosom of his coat. He unfolded two wrappings of paper and exposed to view a third wrapping of waterproof cloth. When this was undone, there was an inner wrapping of silk, and when that fell away I saw a small box fashioned out of some material with which I was not acquainted. In size it resembled a fairly large cigar case; as regards appearance, it was one of the most elegant things I have ever set eyes on.

"you shall know more of this in time, I trust. Let us talk of yourself. Fill your glass. Now—tell me about your bad luck."

There was something winning, and at the same time commanding, about the man, and I soon found myself telling him freely of my recent doings, and particularly of the non-success which had attended my journey to Antwerp. When I had finished, he asked me several questions about my age, education, family, and so on, and then sat thinking silently for some moments. At

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last he looked up, giving me a sharp, straightforward glance.

"Well, Mr. Merrill," he said, "you have been of great service to me to-night, and I should like to return your good offices by serving you myself, so far as I can. I propose to remain in England—in London—for two or three months, in order to read a paper before the Royal Geographical Society. I want a secretary. Will you accept the post? You shall live with me, and your salary shall be twenty pounds a month. What do you say?"

"I say yes, most certainly, sir," I replied. "Your offer is too good to be declined. I am much obliged to you—and I hope I shall be able to do all that you wish."

"Your duties will not be heavy," he answered. "Well, now—when can you come to me. I go to London to-morrow morning—can you join me there on the following day?"

"Ye—es," I said, "I think so. The only difficulty is—I have no money."

"Oh!" he said. "Never mind that. Allow me to hand you your first month's salary in advance." He took out a note-case and gave me two ten-pound notes—"There—now I suppose it will be necessary for you to return to Leeds before going up to town?"

"Yes," I said. "There are things there which I must get."

He took up a Bradshaw and turned over its pages. Then he looked at his watch. "It is half-past nine o'clock," he said. "There is a mail train at midnight—will you travel by that, or remain here overnight as my guest?"

Eventually I decided to travel by the mail. I had a friend in Leeds who would not object to being knocked up in the early hours of the morning, and I should have a longer day in which to transact my business. Mr. Lazaroff nodded assent.

"We have two and a half hours before us, then," said he. "Let me make you comfortable for that time. Take another cigar and refill your glass. There—now supposing I tell you something about my recent travels?"

The next two hours passed away very pleasantly. Mr. Lazaroff's conversation was alike brilliant and interesting. At a quarter to twelve he accompanied me to the train, having previously given me his address in London. By his direction, one of the hotel servants brought me a travelling-rug; he himself pressed upon me a handful of cigars and a flask of whisky. We shook hands cordially, and the train carried me away. During the whole of the journey I had but two thoughts—one, of the strange chance which had thrown this piece of good fortune in my way; the other, of the contents of the little box which Mr. Lazaroff valued so highly.

CHAPTER II.

THE PORPHYRY BOX AND ITS CONTENTS.

I USED part of the money which Mr. Lazaroff had advanced me in fitting myself out with clothes and linen, most of my old wardrobe having been sacrificed in the effort to keep body and soul together. I was not sure of the style in which my new employer would live in town (though his address, Mount Street, Berkeley Square, seemed to suggest aristocratic surroundings), but I reflected that the private secretary of a noted explorer must be at least respectable in appearance. I therefore left Leeds on the appointed day in possession of a good outfit, packed in a brand new portmanteau; and I could not help contrasting my condition, as I tucked myself comfortably up in Mr. Lazaroff's travelling-rug, with my almost penniless state barely forty hours previously. It seemed to me that I had really fallen on my feet, after all, and that the world was not quite so black as I had felt inclined to paint it.

It was towards the end of a grey afternoon in October that I reached London and drove to Mr. Lazaroff's house. I had only visited the Metropolis once before, and I was somewhat confused by the noise and bustle of its crowded streets. I sat gazing at the continually moving procession of men and vehicles until my cab turned into a quieter thoroughfare and pulled up before a house the exterior of which suggested a sort of aristocratic solemnity. It was certainly not a large house, viewed from the street, for its frontage was narrow, though it rose to the height of three or four storeys. While I stood looking at it the door opened and a boy in livery appeared on the threshold. Dim as the light was, I perceived that he was a negro, a full-blooded African, and deformed. He came out, addressed me by name very respectfully, and asked me to enter. From the hall I watched him pay the cabman, seize upon my portmanteau, and return to the house. As he closed the door and turned to me I noticed that he

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was undeniably ugly, and that his eyes were of an extraordinary keenness.

"Will you follow me to your room, sir?" he said. "Mr. Lazaroff is out at present, but he will return within the next hour."

I followed the negro up a softly carpeted staircase and into an exceedingly comfortable bedroom. A bright fire burnt in the grate, an easy chair was drawn up to the hearth-rug, and on a table at its side lay several newspapers and a book or two. The appointments of the room were handsome, and I felt that my good fortune was indeed following me.

The negro unstrapped my portmanteau and then left me to myself, but within five minutes he reappeared with a tea-tray, which he placed on the table near the fire. Then, telling me that he would inform me of Mr. Lazaroff's return if he should come in before I left my room, he withdrew once more. I poured out a cup of tea and sipped it slowly before changing my clothes and getting rid of the dust of the journey. The tea was of an exceptionally fine flavour, which seemed to be still further improved by one of the slices of lemon which accompanied it. Clearly, I thought, I shall have pleasant times with Mr. Lazaroff.

As I went downstairs, half an hour later, I met the negro on his way to inform me that Mr. Lazaroff had arrived. He preceded me to a room on the ground floor, and, throwing open the door, admitted me to the presence of my employer. A hasty survey of the apartment showed me that it was handsomely furnished, well stocked with books and pictures, and evidently the room of a man of taste and culture. My chief interest, however, was centred in Mr. Lazaroff. He was attired in an irreproachable frock-coat and dark trousers, and at his elbow stood a glossy silk hat. He rose from the desk at which he had been writing and shook hands with me. His greeting was hearty and cordial, and I felt at home on the instant.

"I was sorry to be out when you arrived," he said. "But, you see, I only arrived myself yesterday, and there has been much to do. I hope that Nero has attended to you properly?"

I replied that I had received every attention, and then, with a glance round the orderly apartment, ventured to remark that he seemed to have settled down very quickly.

"Ah, yes," he answered; "but of course this is not my own house, you understand. It has been lent to me during my stay in England by my dear friend Zoubkorski, whose name, as a scientist, is doubtless well-known to you. He himself is on a lecturing tour in the States—at least, he is on his way there. I regret that we did not meet before he left, but I dare say we shall see each other before the year is out. He and I are the dearest friends—all that's mine is his, and all that's his is mine. Very nice, isn't it?"

It was of no moment to me, so far as I could see, whether the home belonged to Mr. Lazaroff or to his friend Zoubkorski; it was exceedingly comfortable and well appointed. After the roar and bustle of the streets through which I had passed, it seemed very quiet, too. I could not help noticing that every room was thickly carpeted, and that the doors opened and shut with absolute noiselessness. I concluded that Mr. Zoubkorski was one of those men who love to pursue their studies in an atmosphere of perfect peace.

Mr. Lazaroff and myself dined that evening in a richly furnished dining-room. The dinner, served by the negro boy Nero and a smart waiting-maid, was of a quality to which I was not acccustomed, and I began to flatter myself that if I were to live in such style I should ere long become an epicure. Over our coffee and cigarettes Mr. Lazaroff informed me that his friend Zoubkorski was a man of wealth, who devoted his life to scientific research, principally in the direction of chemistry.

"And, by the by," he said, "I'll show you his laboratory—he has not only left me his keys, but made me free of his apparatus. Would you like to see it?"

"Yes, indeed," I answered, and followed him from the room towards the rear of the house. We presently came to a door hidden by a thick curtain, and when this was unlocked we found another door behind it which seemed to me to be made of iron or steel, though it was covered with green baize.

"Zoubkorski insists on quiet, you perceive," said Mr. Lazaroff, laughingly, as he led the way into the laboratory, where a faint light burned. "Yes, that door is of solid steel, and see, there are solid steel shutters to all the windows. Once in here, you can't hear a sound of the outside world."

The laboratory was, I imagine, pretty much like all other laboratories. I knew little of science, and to me the apparatus so dear to the heart of Mr. Zoubkorski was simply a collection of jars, instruments,

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crucibles, retorts, curious-looking pipkins and pots and matters which I did not understand. I think Lazaroff saw that I was not particularly edified, for he soon led me back to the room in which he had first received me. There we established ourselves on either side of a bright fire, in easy chairs, and Lazaroff produced his cigar-case. The negro Nero appeared presently with a decanter of whisky, a syphon of soda, and glasses. Lazaroff looked at me and smiled.

"On this our first night together," he said, "we may permit ourselves a little indulgence at an earlier hour than usual. Help yourself when you feel inclined. Now, I wanted to discuss two or three matters with you to-night, which I should like putting into shape to-morrow. Thanks; while you are on your legs you might give me some soda-and-whisky. There, now that we're comfortable I'll tell you of what I was thinking. I want you to comprehend the situation exactly. Here I am, Melchior Lazaroff, a Russian subject, just returned from an exploration of Central Australia such as no man ever made. I am known in my own country as an explorer, but what I have done before is as nothing to what I have just accomplished. I have discovered in Central Australia—mind you, in wilds which no European has ever penetrated—I have discovered—what do you think?"

I shook my head. He had bent towards me as he spoke, and at the last words laid his hand on my knee. He now rose, with a low, curious laugh, and walked across the room towards a safe which stood in one corner. Without uttering another word he unlocked this, drew out a drawer, and took from it a canvas bag. He came back to my side, and taking a newspaper from the table, laid it across my knee and shook out the contents of the bag upon it.

"There!" he said. "What are these things?"

I looked and saw a mass of what appeared to me to be dull bits of broken glass. An idea suddenly flashed across my mind. I looked from the things on my knee to Lazaroff's face, cynical and smiling.

"Diamonds?" I asked.

"Good boy!" he exclaimed, patting my shoulder. "Diamonds—and of the first water. Aye! there are no diamonds in the world like these, Merrill! Talk about your South African diamonds! Why—but stay, I'll show you something else."

He went back to the safe, and returned to me carrying a small package.

"Here's your old friend the porphyry box," he said, smiling. "You perceive that it's still wrapped up very carefully." He began to divest it of its coverings. "There! Now, there's a secret in opening this box. You couldn't open it in a month. But—*v'la!*"

He pressed some corner of the porphyry box as he spoke, and on the instant the lid flew open.

I have often since that moment stared at the show of diamonds which you can see any day in Bond Street, but I never saw anything so glittering, so full of white fire, as the sight which dazzled me when the lid of the porphyry box sprang open. It was a dream of iridescent light, indescribable, marvellous! I gasped. It seemed as if the shifting, changing, subtle light of the diamonds had taken my breath away. I think I closed my eyes; the next thing of which I was conscious was that diamonds and dull stones were both gone, and that Lazaroff was sitting opposite me again, puffing out wreaths of smoke from his cigar, and regarding me with lazy eyes.

"Those diamonds are a few that I have had polished," he said. "You perceive the importance of my discovery?"

"Yes," I answered. As a matter of fact, I did not realise it at all. I was simply stupefied.

"Now, this discovery," he said, "means more than you would imagine. Why have I not taken the news of it to my own country first? For a simple reason, Merrill. This nation of yours is the first commercial nation in the world. It must be here in England that the discovery of diamonds in Australia must be first revealed. Now, the question is, how shall we reveal it? So far, Merrill, you are the only Englishman who knows my secret; and before any others know it there is much to be done. I wish, first of all, to be celebrated as the first explorer of Central Australia; next, to be known as the discoverer of diamonds there. I have already arranged to lecture to your Royal Geographical Society about my travels. I shall say nothing to them of the diamonds. Although I have come here, to London, first, the first person who must actually see my diamonds is the representative of the Czar in this country."

"The Russian Ambassador?"

"Exactly. I intend to present the polished gems which you have seen just now to his Excellency, as a gift for his Imperial master, whom he is to meet shortly. Now,

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the difficulty is to obtain an audience of his Excellency. Before I left Russia, four years ago, I was nobody. I had visited many countries, and explored some which Europeans do not usually visit; but I was not known, save to a few *savants*, who appreciated my work. Now that I have really achieved success, I intend to profit by it. What I propose is this: I must be what you call "boomed" in the London newspapers. To-morrow you shall devote yourself to concocting some little paragraphs—of course, with my assistance—which shall be sent round to the various newspaper offices. We will announce my arrival in London; we will hint at my wonderful discoveries in Central Australia; we will mention my forthcoming address to your Royal Geographical Society. I shall begin to be talked of; men of science will call upon me; I shall be invited out; I shall be what you call a lion, and eventually his Excellency will be obliged to recognise a fellow-countryman who has achieved something. To him—to him!—I shall reveal the secret of the diamonds. Then, my duty to Russia discharged, I shall place my discovery in the hands of your commercial world."

"I think I see what you mean," I said.

"That is well. To-morrow morning, then, we will begin our work, Now, for the rest of the evening, suppose we amuse ourselves by examining our friend Zoubkorski's library. It is a matter of ten thousand regrets to me that Zoubkorski should have had this engagement. I long for a chat with him."

Next morning Lazaroff dictated to me several paragraphs bearing upon his exploration of Central Australia. The first, a general one, to be sent to every newspaper in London and to the principal agencies, ran as follows:—

"The celebrated Russian explorer, Melchior Lazaroff, who has spent the last three years in Central Australia, has arrived in London on his way to St. Petersburg, and is shortly to lecture before the Royal Geographical Society. Mr. Lazaroff, who had previously made important excursions in Northern Siberia, Equatorial Africa, and Western Australia, has during his last exploration made discoveries of a most remarkable nature, and there can be little doubt that his revelations before the learned Society just mentioned will prove to be not only interesting, but absolutely startling."

A second paragraph, forwarded only to a few leading financial newspapers, was to this effect:—

"Mr. Lazaroff, the celebrated Russian explorer, who has just returned from Central Australia, and who is to read a paper before the Royal Geographical Society at a recent date, is said to have made a discovery which will cause something like a panic amongst a certain section of City men. It is whispered that Mr. Lazaroff has not only discovered the REAL OPHIR, but that he has also found that its treasures are as tangible to-day as they were in the days of Solomon."

Mr. Lazaroff possessed a stylographic apparatus which enabled me to produce several copies of these paragraphs. By noon the next day I had despatched all of them to their destinations. After dinner that night we looked over the evening papers. One paragraph was duly inserted in each. At breakfast next morning we overhauled the great dailies: it was there, too, and in some of them there was a short editorial paragraph pointing out the probable advantages, scientific, commercial, and geographical, to be derived from a better acquaintance with Central Australia.

During the next few days Mr. Lazaroff was inundated with invitations. He was asked to breakfast with the Duke of This and the Marquis of That; to lunch with the Earl of Somewhere; and to dine with Lord Somewhere Else. Cards were left in shoals at his door. An enterprising editor called upon him with a most tempting offer; he received half a dozen letters from up-to-date publishers, suggesting that he should write an account of his travels. To all these blandishments Mr. Lazaroff was quite oblivious. He went nowhere; he accepted nothing in the way of invitations. Then people began to call upon him. In one afternoon came: the Secretary for the Colonies; Sir Titus Tetlow, the distinguished botanist; Lord Starfish, well known for his researches in metallurgy; Professor Flitcroft, the famous geologist, and Lady Troutbeck, the most renowned lion-hunter in London. To all these people Lazaroff turned a deaf ear. His whole time was spent in his friend Zoubkorski's laboratory, into which he did not allow even me to enter. He was engaged in experiments; nothing must disturb him.

But one morning he held up a letter and smiled at me across the breakfast-table. The Russian Ambassador proposed to visit the distinguished Russian traveller upon the morrow!

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CHAPTER III.

WHO IS MR. LAZAROFF?

THE announcement of the Russian Ambassador's proposed visit appeared to afford Lazaroff the most lively satisfaction. He rubbed his hands gleefully and beamed upon me as I sat confronting him at the breakfast table. I could see from the gleam of his eye that he anticipated the best results from the coming interview.

"This is the desired end," he said; "or, to be more exact, it is the step which will lead to it. My diamonds will be accepted by the Czar—their fame will be noised abroad all over Europe, and we shall be able to float our company with *éclat*. You shall have a good post in the company, Merrill."

"Thank you," I replied. "I was not aware, though, that you thought of promoting a company."

"Certainly, my dear sir, we must form a company! I tell you those diamond fields of mine are the richest in the world. We must have capital to work them. We shall have to get concessions and what not. Oh, yes, a great company, certainly! And we must not forget that 'twas I, Lazaroff, who discovered this new Ophir—nay, it is probably the real Ophir of Solomon. Talk of your South African diamonds! Pooh! Wait until the Central Australians are put on the market."

It seemed to me that Lazaroff was unduly excited that morning. He talked incessantly of the Ambassador's visit and of the advantages to be gained by making a present of some of his diamonds to the Czar. While he talked he occupied himself in unpacking some of his chests and trunks, which were full of curiosities collected during his recent travels. Some of these he arranged in Zoubkorski's study, so that the Ambassador might inspect them. Lazaroff told me the history of each article as he unpacked it. His memory was certainly remarkable, and his observations full of keen perception and rare scientific learning.

The Russian Ambassador called upon Mr. Lazaroff about noon. He was attended by an *attaché*, but the visit was in all other respects quite devoid of any ostentation or show of dignity. The two callers were immediately shown into Lazaroff's study, and introductions took place all round. I had wished to withdraw on the arrival of the Ambassador, but Lazaroff insisted upon my remaining in the room. I was somewhat uneasy at the prospect of meeting so great a man; but the Ambassador turned out to be exceedingly pleasant and cordial in manner, and his first exchange of conversation with Mr. Lazaroff put me at my ease.

"So you have just returned from Central Australia, Mr. Lazaroff?" said his Excellency, when the introductions were over.

Mr. Lazaroff bowed.

"I understand that you have made some most important discoveries," continued his Excellency, who spoke in very good English. "Something of the nature of a new Ophir, eh?"

"I have certainly made several discoveries of great importance, your Excellency. The ethnographic and geological results of my exploration are remarkably satisfactory. Your Excellency is, of course, aware that the extreme centre of Australia had never previously been penetrated?"

"So I understand."

"It is now three years since I left St. Petersburg *en route* for Melbourne," resumed Lazaroff, "and I had little hope then of really achieving the object of my journey. How I have succeeded I shall shortly tell the world in my book on Central Australia."

"Ah, you are writing an account of your travels? And there, I presume, are some of the curiosities which you have collected in your wanderings? I trust you will not forget your native country, Mr. Lazaroff. There are museums, you know, in Russia as well as in England. By the by, of what province are you?"

"I am of Wesenburg, in Esthonia," replied Lazaroff. Then, reverting to the Ambassador's last remark, he added, "I assure your Excellency of my entire devotion to my own nation. My collection is shortly to be forwarded to St. Petersburg, whither I shall follow it as soon as my book is published in this country and I have arranged certain financial matters of moment."

"Financial? That reminds me that I have heard rumours of a somewhat startling nature with respect to your discoveries. Come, is it a great gold mine that you have found?"

"It is not gold, your Excellency; it is diamonds."

"Diamonds—in Central Australia?"

"It will give me great satisfaction to exhibit them to your Excellency. They are the finest diamonds in the world. I defy any expert to pronounce them inferior to those of South Africa."

While he thus spoke, Lazaroff walked over

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to the safe, unlocked it, and produced the bag of unpolished stones which he had shown me a week previously. He shook the stones out upon the centre table, and, with a half-careless gesture, invited his guests to look at them.

"Ah! diamonds in the rough," said his Excellency, fingering two or three of the largest stones. "And these are from Central Australia?"

"They are from the finest diamond field in the world, your Excellency. It will open up possibilities such as the South African fields can never afford."

"I am no judge of diamonds in the rough," said the Ambassador. "You have none that have been in the hands of the cutter, I suppose, Mr. Lazaroff?"

"I was about to show you a few specimens, your Excellency," answered Lazaroff. He had taken the porphyry box from the safe and was divesting it of its wrappings. "There are a small number of diamonds in this box which I have had cut and polished, and I have dared to hope that I might persuade your Excellency to present them to his Imperial Majesty the Czar. It would give me great pleasure to know that his Imperial Majesty was the first recipient of the marvellous diamonds."

Lazaroff opened the porphyry box and displayed the contents. The Ambassador and his *attaché* uttered exclamations of surprise and pleasure.

"Marvellous, indeed!" said the Ambassador. "They are magnificent! What light! what supreme purity! It will indeed give me great pleasure to undertake such a duty, Mr. Lazaroff. Very fortunately, I leave for Berlin to-night, where I am to meet his Imperial Majesty, who visits the German Court on his way to Denmark. I shall certainly be pleased to present your diamonds. Dear me, how exceedingly fine they are! I suppose I am right in conjecturing that it is your intention to form a financial company here in London for the purpose of working the diamond fields of Central Australia?"

"Your Excellency apprehends me exactly. I thank your Excellency for your condescension in deigning to present these gems to the Czar. The package shall be delivered at the Embassy this afternoon."

Lazaroff was about to remove the diamonds from the table when the negro boy entered with a card. Lazaroff was about to shake his head; but he suddenly glanced at the card a second time, as though he remembered the name inscribed there.

"Sir Adolphus Jipson?" he said. "Have I not heard that he is a great authority on precious stones? Your Excellency, who knows London better than I do, may, perhaps, be acquainted with Sir Adolphus?"

The Ambassador replied that he knew Sir Adolphus Jipson very well indeed, and would much like him to see the diamonds.

"'Ah! diamonds in the rough,' said his Excellency."

Lazaroff accordingly directed me to usher Sir Adolphus into the study. I found him in the hall—a little old man with keen eyes shining through large spectacles. I bowed him into the study, where the Ambassador introduced him to Lazaroff. Sir Adolphus's eyes almost immediately wandered to the heap of rough diamonds on the table.

"Ah!" he said. "I heard a little rumour in the City which led me to think that you had discovered a new diamond field, Mr. Lazaroff, and I confess that I called upon you this morning in order to attempt to persuade you to show me your specimens. I conclude these are they. May I examine them?"

"I shall feel much honoured," answered Lazaroff.

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I was much struck by the fashion in which the old scientist examined the diamonds. He produced a glass from his waistcoat pocket, screwed it into his eye, pursed up his lips, and whistled softly to himself as he examined the rough stones. When he had finished, he turned an absolutely inscrutable face to Mr. Lazaroff.

"Have you had any cut?" he asked.

Mr. Lazaroff produced the porphyry box. When he opened it, and the glittering contents fell before Sir Adolphus's eye, I saw his face suddenly relax and then become inscrutable again. He went through the same process of examination with the polished as with the unpolished stones. At last he

"I was much struck by the fashion in which the old scientist examined the diamonds."

put them down and returned the glass to his pocket.

"Well, what is your opinion, Sir Adolphus?" said the Ambassador, who had watched the old scientist's proceedings very narrowly.

"My opinion, your Excellency, is that these are very fine stones—remarkably fine," said Sir Adolphus. He turned to Mr. Lazaroff again. "You found them in Central Australia?"

"That is so," replied Mr. Lazaroff.

"You had gone prepared for mining, then?" said Sir Adolphus.

"I had gone prepared for anything."

"Umph! Is the mine you worked likely to yield still further?"

Mr. Lazaroff smiled at the Russian Ambassador and waved his hands deprecatingly towards his questioner.

"All will be told in good time," he answered smilingly. "I must not say more until our company is formed."

"Ah!" said Sir Adolphus. "Of course not. Well, have you any objection, Mr. Lazaroff, to lending me two of your diamonds—one rough, the other polished—for a day or two? I sha'n't run off with 'em," he added, with a dry laugh.

Mr. Lazaroff had no objection whatever, but he regretted that the only polished stones in his possession were those in the porphyry box, and they, he said, were already destined for his Imperial Majesty the Czar, to whom his Excellency was shortly to present them.

"Oh, I see!" said Sir Adolphus. "First-fruits to your own country, eh? Quite right—quite right. Well, you'll lend me one of these rough ones, then? I should just like to conduct an experiment upon it."

Mr. Lazaroff was only too delighted, and Sir Adolphus picked out one of the rough diamonds and carefully stowed it away in his purse. Then, after some desultory conversation about the other results of Mr. Lazaroff's exploration, the two gentlemen rose to take leave. Mr. Lazaroff arrested the Ambassador for a moment.

"The case of gems shall be conveyed to your Excellency by my secretary this afternoon," said he. "Permit me, before you leave, to explain to your Excellency the secret of opening this box, in which I propose to place the diamonds. Your Excellency perceives that it is of very delicate and beautiful workmanship. It is opened by a spring; you press with a finger and thumb there, and the lid flies back!"

The Ambassador listened carefully, promised to explain the secret to his Imperial Majesty on presenting the diamonds for his inspection and acceptance, and withdrew, offering Sir Adolphus a lift in his brougham. Mr. Lazaroff and I attended our visitors to the door, and in the hall the *attaché* addressed me in an undertone and in very excellent English:—

"I conclude, sir," said he, "that it is you who will bring the package to the Embassy this afternoon; and, as it will be necessary for you to inquire for me, may I ask you to remember my name - Captain Troubetzkoy?"

I bowed, and he passed on and followed the Ambassador and Sir Adolphus into the

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brougham. Mr. Lazaroff and I turned back into the house again.

"That is capital!" said he, rubbing his hands. "In three days every daily newspaper in Europe will be ringing with the praises of my beautiful diamonds. Accepted by the Czar—worn by the lovely Czarina! Why, it is the most splendid of advertisements. But come, I have work in the laboratory. May I trouble you to go into the morning-room and bring me the package of papers you will see there on the mantelpiece? They are on the left-hand side."

When I returned from this mission, Mr. Lazaroff was locking the safe wherein he had once more bestowed the precious stones. He took the papers from my hands, dictated to me a paragraph about the visit of the Russian Ambassador and the diamonds which were to be presented to the Czar of Russia, and then went off to the laboratory, leaving me to make copies and send them to the newspapers.

When we met at luncheon, Mr. Lazaroff laid by the side of his cover a small parcel very neatly done up in oiled silk. It was sealed in several places, and I made no doubt that it contained the gems. In this supposition I was correct. As soon as the meal was over he handed me the packet and bade me carry it to the Russian Embassy. He gave me particular instructions about staying nowhere on my way, and made me button my coat over the breast pocket in which I had placed the package. As I left the room he called me back.

"By the by," he said, "when you have discharged your errand to the Embassy you might drive down to the City and leave me this note in Threadneedle Street. I shall have no correspondence this afternoon, so don't hurry. A little fresh air will do you good."

I left the house and proceeded to the Embassy. At the door I was confronted by a gigantic porter, who, upon my mentioning Troubetzkoy's name, immediately conducted me into a small waiting-room. There the *attaché* presently joined me, and from his manner I judged that he was in haste and had no time for more words than were absolutely necessary.

"You have the package?" he said, holding out his hand for it. "Ah, yes; that is right. We are in so much haste here this afternoon, in consequence of his Excellency's imminent departure for the Continent, that I am sure you will excuse me. The package will at once be placed in his Excellency's hands. Good day."

The whole proceeding was over in a minute or two, and I presently found myself outside the Embassy with the package left behind me. I had not felt over well pleased to carry anything so valuable in those crowded streets, and I was glad to be rid of it. I turned away from the West End towards the City, and, as it was a fine afternoon, I decided to walk as far as Charing Cross before taking a hansom for Threadneedle Street. Now that the diamonds were safely out of my hands I was in no particular hurry. I therefore sauntered along, gazing at the various objects of interest around me and at the crowds of people in the streets.

"When I returned, Mr. Lazaroff was locking the safe."

There was much that impressed me in London, where I was a comparative stranger. But as I turned out of Trafalgar Square into the Strand, I saw something that for the moment made me forget everything. It was the face of the *attaché* Troubetzkoy, in a passing hansom, which was being driven along at a sharp pace. There was nothing wonderful in Troubetzkoy's being there; it was the expression in his face which surprised me. He looked like a man who wants to get somewhere in a violent hurry. I concluded that he was probably on his way to Charing Cross to make final arrangements for the Ambassador's departure, and dismissed

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the incident from my mind. It was about half-past two when I left Mount Street for the Embassy; by the time I had delivered Lazaroff's letter in Threadneedle Street, and returned, it was past six o'clock. The house was all in darkness; Nero had not even lighted the hall lamp. I rang and knocked; no answer came. I rang again and again, and a third time with increased force, but still there was no reply to my summons. As I stood there I heard footsteps coming along the quiet street, and presently a tall man came up and paused at my side. He gave me a keen glance in the light of the nearest gas-lamp.

"Is that where Mr. Lazaroff, the great explorer, lives?" he asked.

"Yes," I said. "But I can't get any answer to the door. They must all be out; and yet I don't understand it. The servants ought to be in."

He gave me another sharp glance.

"Do you live there, too?" he asked.

"I am Mr. Lazaroff's secretary," I said rather haughtily.

"Oh!" he answered. "And how long have you been in his employ, may I ask?"

"Really," I said, "I don't quite see that that is any business of yours."

"It may or may not be," he answered; "but I may as well tell you that I am a police officer from Scotland Yard."

I stood staring at him with a sudden, instinctive fear.

"Is there anything wrong?" I asked. "I know nothing of Mr. Lazaroff except that he engaged me a fortnight ago."

The man gave a long look of scrutiny.

"Just come under this lamp a minute," he said. "I can see you've been duped. There; you may read that; it's a copy of a cablegram just received from the chief of police at Melbourne."

I took the slip of paper and read these words:—

"Man now in London calling himself Lazaroff an impostor. Real Lazaroff just arrived here from Fort Bourke after successful exploration."

I handed the paper back. What did it all mean?

CHAPTER IV.

THE FATE OF MR. TROUBETZKOY.

THE man from Scotland Yard was watching me keenly when I looked up at him. It seemed to me that, although he had said something about my being duped, there was still some suspicion in his glance. He folded up the paper and restored it to his pocket-book.

"Well?" he said, "what do you make of that?"

I shook my head.

"I don't understand it," I replied. "I know nothing of Mr. Lazaroff, or of the man who called himself by that name, except that he professed to be the explorer of Central Australia, from which he had just returned. Why, he had brought back trunks full of scientific specimens—he was showing them to the Russian Ambassador in his room this morning!"

"Oh, there's no doubt the man has made people believe he was Lazaroff. But the Russian Ambassador—what was he doing there?"

"He came to inspect Mr. Lazaroff's collection, and, more particularly, some specimen diamonds which he had discovered in Central Australia."

"Diamonds, eh? Well?"

By that time I began to perceive that there was certainly something wrong, and I determined to tell the whole story.

"I think I had better tell you all I know," I said. "If there is imposture going on, it may help you if I disclose everything that I have seen and heard."

"Just so," he answered. "But you shall tell it at headquarters. Come to the end of the street, we'll get a hansom there."

All the way to Scotland Yard my companion said nothing, and I had no desire to talk, for I was trying to collect my thoughts. We were soon in the presence of some police official of importance, and the man who had accosted me in Mount Street briefly told him under what circumstances he had come across me. The official motioned me to a seat.

"Now, sir," he said, "what do you know of this so-called Mr. Lazaroff and his doings since you joined him?"

I thought it best to begin at the beginning, so I described the whole story of my connection with Lazaroff, from the meeting behind the church at Hull to the delivery of the diamonds to the Russian Ambassador. The official listened with close attention.

"You actually delivered these diamonds, or, rather, a package which you believe to have contained diamonds, to the Russian Ambassador this afternoon?" he said, when I concluded.

"I handed the package to Mr. Trou-

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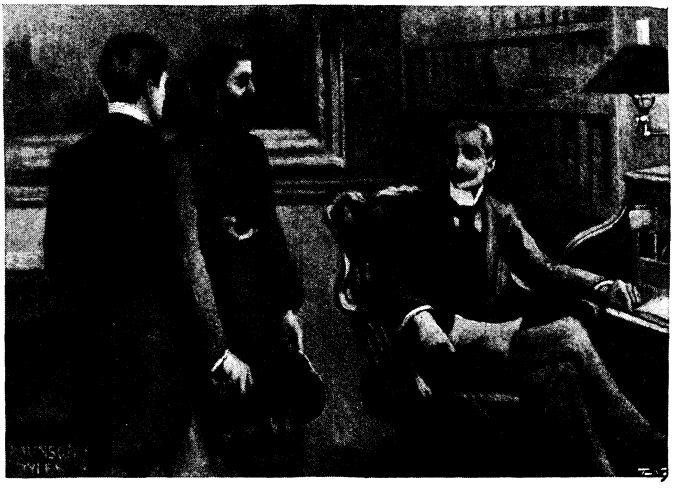
betzkoy, one of his *attachés*, about three o'clock, at the Embassy."

"Did you see the diamonds placed in the package?"

"No, I saw them in the box when the Ambassador left the house in Mount Street, but I did not see the contents of the package handed to me by Mr. Lazaroff. It was wrapped up and sealed when I received it."

My interrogator considered matters.

"The Russian Ambassador leaves Charing Cross at half-past nine to-night for Dover, *en route* for Calais and Berlin," he said. "He must be seen at once. The contents of that package must be examined. I must ask you to accompany me to the Embassy, Mr. Merrill. And, in the meantime, Stephens," he added, turning to the man who had brought me there, "let the house in Mount Street be searched—I will drive round there from the Embassy."



"The Ambassador read the cablegram and looked at me in a surprised fashion."

I followed my new custodian into the courtyard, and was presently seated by his side in a cab which drove swiftly away to the Russian Embassy. Like the lesser official, he was extremely reserved, but once or twice he put questions to me which seemed to suggest that he feared some plot. I, on my part, had already got my head full of ideas about Nihilists, Anarchists, Terrorists, and what not, and I turned hot and cold at the thought that I had, perhaps, been an unconscious tool in the hands of a relentless conspirator. By the time we drew up at the door of the Embassy I was in a state of considerable anxiety and excitement.

The hall of the Embassy was in some confusion—great piles of luggage were everywhere, and the porters and servants hurried here and there as if there were still much to be done ere the Ambassador started on his journey. The man who admitted me in the afternoon barred our way, but at a few whispered words from my companion he led us into the little waiting-room which I had previously seen. There we were presently joined by an aristocratic-looking man, in a sort of undress uniform, who appeared to recognise the Scotland Yard official. The latter drew him aside, and a whispered conversation took place between them. The man in uniform then withdrew, only to return in a few minutes and beckon us to follow him. "His Excellency has little time to spare, but he will see you at once," he said, as we passed up a flight of stairs.

We found the Ambassador writing at his desk in a small cabinet. A secretary was similarly occupied close by, but at a sign he and the man who had shown us in left the room. The Ambassador looked at my companion, then at me. "I am much pressed for time, Inspector," he said. "I suppose your business is of great importance?"

"It may be of the most serious importance, your Excellency. To waste no words, you paid a visit this morning to the house of a man giving himself out to be the distinguished Russian traveller, Melchior Lazaroff?"

"I did."

"You promised to deliver to his Imperial Majesty the Czar a package supposed to contain diamonds?"

"Supposed? But I saw the diamonds—very fine gems, indeed. If I mistake not, this gentleman—Mr. Lazaroff's secretary, is it not?—was present. I supposed when I saw you enter the apartment just now that you had brought me the package. I had just been thinking that if they were not here soon I should be obliged to leave London without them."

The Inspector turned upon me with a sharp look. As for me, I stared at the Ambassador.

"But—but I brought the package here at three o'clock!" I said.

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"Ah!" said the Ambassador. "I have not received it. To whom was it delivered?"

"I gave it into the hands of Mr. Troubetzkoy, the gentleman who accompanied your Excellency this morning," I replied. "He instructed me to do so when he left the house with your Excellency."

The Ambassador frowned.

"Then he exceeded his duty," he said. "A package of such importance should have been handed to me personally. However"—he touched a bell on his desk and gave some order in Russian to the servant who answered it. "But your presence, Inspector, how is that accounted for?"

The Inspector drew out a cablegram.

"We have reason to believe, your Excellency, that the man who passed himself off as Lazaroff is an impostor. If your Excellency will read this cablegram, received early this evening from Melbourne, you will understand why we attach some serious importance to the news given us by this young gentleman."

The Ambassador read the cablegram and looked at me in a surprised fashion.

"Do you know nothing of this man?" he said.

The Inspector anticipated me.

"He knew nothing, your Excellency, until a fortnight ago. He seems, so far as I can make out, to have been employed for the simple purpose of carrying the package from this man who called himself Lazaroff to your Excellency. He tells me that he has done practically no secretarial work, and that makes me feel sure that when the moment came for the conveyance of the package to your Excellency it was necessary that it should be brought here by some Englishman. It seems to me that the so-called Lazaroff dared not show himself at the Embassy."

The Ambassador seemed anxious and puzzled.

"In brief," he said, looking keenly at the Inspector, "you seem to think that there is something behind all this? What is in your mind?"

"I am afraid that the whole thing is a very cleverly and patiently devised scheme for putting an infernal machine in your Excellency's hands for conveyance to his Majesty the Czar," answered the Inspector.

The Ambassador grew more anxious. He suddenly let one hand drop on the desk, and the lines of thought on his face deepened.

"Ah!" he said. "I remember that this man showed me some secret spring by which the box opened! Great Heavens! could it have been—but why does not Troubetzkoy come?"

At that moment the servant entered. He spoke in Russian, and as he spoke I saw the Ambassador's face assume still further perplexity. He turned to the Inspector.

"Mr. Troubetzkoy left the Embassy shortly after three o'clock, and has not yet returned," he said. "That is most strange—he is to accompany me on my journey at half-past nine, and I had entrusted him with duties which should certainly have occupied him all the afternoon. At what hour did you deliver the package to Mr. Troubetzkoy?" he added, turning to me.

"At three o'clock, your Excellency. And at twenty minutes to four I saw Mr. Troubetzkoy driving in a hansom cab into the Strand from Trafalgar Square."

I had omitted this detail in my story to the Inspector, and he now turned upon me with a sharp exclamation. The Ambassador, however, uttered a louder one.

"Ah!" he said. "I see—I see it all! I feared that Troubetzkoy was once again involved in financial embarrassment—he has stolen that package, whatever it may contain, under the impression that he has got fifty thousand pounds' worth of diamonds. That was the value which Sir Adolphus Jipson put upon them as we drove home together. Yes—yes—that must be the solution. But—what does that box contain? or, rather, what is that box?"

The Inspector remained lost in thought for some moments before he answered the Ambassador's question. Then he looked up and shook his head.

"If your Excellency's surmise is correct," he said, "I fear Mr. Troubetzkoy will already have left England. He may have escaped to the Continent by the evening boat from Harwich—either Rotterdam or Antwerp are favourite places for the disposal of stolen gems. But, considering everything, is it worth while tracking him?"

"That I must leave to you," said the Ambassador, rising. "I am obliged to terminate our interview, for my train leaves London in half-an-hour. Be good enough to communicate with my secretary on these matters during my absence. You will, of course, communicate with our own police agents in London at once?"

The Inspector promised that all necessary steps should be taken both as regards the man calling himself Lazaroff and the missing

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Troubetzkoy, and we then left the Embassy. Our cab was still waiting outside, and we got into it and drove to Mount Street. The Inspector was extremely thoughtful; but as we pulled up at the house he made a remark which I scarcely comprehended at the time—

"It will be strange if to-morrow does not bring a solution of the whole mystery!"

I had no time to ask him what he meant before we hurried into the house. There were half a dozen policemen in plain clothes there, and they seemed to have ransacked the place already. I went round the house with the Inspector, at his request. So far as I could see, everything was exactly as I had left it early in the afternoon. In the dining-room the luncheon table remained uncleared; in the study there still remained the various objects of interest which Lazaroff had arranged there that morning, together with the papers and letters which I had left on my desk. But in every room and in the kitchens the fires had long died out, and the house was cold and cheerless.

At the Inspector's request I gave him full descriptions of the people who had occupied the house since I had known it—Lazaroff himself, the negro boy Nero, the waiting-maid Tatia, and the cook Marta. Then there seemed nothing more to be done, and the Inspector, after giving some further instructions to his men, desired me to return with him to Scotland Yard. When we arrived there he took me into his room and bade me take a seat.

"Pray don't consider yourself under arrest, Mr. Merrill," he said pleasantly. "I quite believe that you have simply been a dupe in this matter, and we have no wish to regard you in any other light. But I want you to stay here until we have got a little nearer to the solution of this strange mystery. So long as you can be useful to us we must have you within reach. You shall have supper and as comfortable a room as I can give you. As I said before, I shall be surprised if the morning does not give us a solution of the whole mystery."

Although I scarcely felt perfectly comfortable in my new surroundings, I recognised that there was nothing to be done but to acquiesce in the Inspector's proposal and to make the best of things. Ere long he had supper provided for me in his own room, and while I was eating it he was continually issuing orders and instructions, the exact tenor of which I did not hear. After supper he asked more questions and suggested many things which put certain occurrences at the house in Mount Street in a different light. I began to feel that if I had been of a more suspicious nature I should have suspected the man who called himself Melchior Lazaroff from the first.

At midnight the Inspector suggested that I should like to retire, and, on my replying in the affirmative, he showed me into a small, plainly furnished sleeping apartment which opened out of his office. I was soon in bed, but for some time the novelty of my situation prevented me from sleeping. I heard comings and goings in the next room, and the subdued murmurs of voices never seemed to cease. At last the monotonous sound acted like an opiate and I fell asleep and slept soundly.

When I awoke it was broad daylight, and on glancing at my watch I saw that it was already nine o'clock. I rose at once and dressed hastily. When I opened the door of the room my glance fell on the Inspector, who sat at his desk, just as I had last seen him the previous midnight. He was reading a newspaper, and he lifted his face from it to me with a nod and a smile, which seemed to say that all had turned out well during the night.

"Good morning, Mr. Merrill," he said. "I have been in your room twice since seven o'clock, but you were sound asleep. Well, your mystery is solved, I think. I said it would be strange if it were not solved by morning, did I not?"

"You did—but may I ask what the solution is?" I replied, feeling intensely curious and at the same time relieved.

The Inspector smiled.

"Well," he said, "I'm afraid you'll never know all the ins and outs of the matter—nor, perhaps, shall we—but you're welcome to know as much as the newspapers can tell you. There—read that."

He handed me a copy of the *Daily Telegraph*, and pointed to a paragraph printed in leaded type and headed, "Mysterious Affair in the East End." It ran as follows:—

"The sudden death of an unknown man took place in a private hotel in Silver Square, London Docks, shortly before twelve o'clock last night. Earlier in the evening a tall, well-built man, of somewhat distinguished presence, but dressed in a ready-made suit of blue serge, took a room in the hotel and afterwards supped in the coffee-room. He was seen entering his room a little after half-past eleven, and just before twelve the landlord, Mr. Julius Heilbronner, who happened

to be passing along the corridor, heard a sharp scream as of some person in mortal pain. Finding that it came from the stranger's apartment, he obtained help and broke open the door. On entering the room, Mr. Heilbronner found its occupant lying across the hearthrug in an attitude that suggested a sudden spasm of terrible agony. Although scarcely three minutes had elapsed since hearing the scream, the stranger was quite dead and his limbs were terribly distorted. By his side lay a box of curious make and workmanship, and further examination of the room showed that he had evidently just removed the article from its wrapper of paper and oiled silk. The police at the nearest police-station were at once communicated with, but within an hour the authorities from Scotland Yard had arrived on the scene and taken charge of the case. So far the matter is surrounded with mystery, and the police display great reticence."

"And they will continue to display it," said the Inspector. "Well, do you understand, Mr. Merrill?"

"Not altogether," I said. "I suppose this man was Troubetzkoy?"

"You are quite correct."

"But the cause of his death?"

"Well," he said, "that box was one of the cleverest pieces of devilish ingenuity that was ever devised, though it wasn't an absolutely original dea. It meant instant, horrible death to whoever pressed the spring that opened it. The only mark on the man's body was a slight puncture of the thumb. Our theory is that, when the spring was pressed by the thumb and finger, a concealed needle, hollowed and filled with some deadly poison, was driven hard into the former, with what result you know. You can imagine what would have happened had that box reached the person it was intended for?"

I nodded my head in silence.

"Well," he said presently. "I don't think you'll ever know much more than that, Mr. Merrill. And these people"—he tapped the newspaper lying on the desk—"won't learn any more of the real facts, either. There are some matters which come under our notice that are best said nothing about. You'll take my hint, eh?"

From that day to this I have never heard another word of the pseudo-Lazaroff. But I have no doubt that I was his tool in one of the most cleverly devised plots that ever threatened a certain great person's life.

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THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL AT HOME.

By Rudolph Ireton.

Illustrated by J. Macfarlane.

THE "BOKA," OR WINTER DRESS OF ABORIGINES IN WEST AUSTRALIA. A PIECE OF SMOULDERING BARK IS CARRIED TO KINDLE A FIRE WHEN A HALT IS MADE.

SLOWLY and gradually the garment of civilisation is being extended to the Australian black man, and the result is—extermination. Whether the aborigines' objection to alter their natural state is an instinctive foreboding of accessory dangers, no one knows. It is a fact, however, that their aversion to clothes is as great as the Kaffir's passion for tall white hats and fancy silk waistcoats. The South African "boy," while earning the white man's money, looks forward to the time when he can withdraw up country with his stock of European clothes, and enough money to buy cattle and wives. While he labours, he is quietly accumulating at a neighbouring second-hand clothiers a heterogeneous fancy dress wardrobe of humorous variety. But this is not so at the Antipodes. In and around the settled districts custom and the police demand that blacks shall be clothed. Left to himself he throws off the trammels and trappings of society, and his garments are scanty. In the south, where it is cooler than elsewhere, a blanket or opossum skin is all that is needed; while in warmer latitudes the birthday suit only is worn, and the white man's influence is forgotten. Charles Reade's careful sketch of the aboriginal "Jacky" is an instance. When his master gave him his house and contents on leaving for England, Jacky called together his fellows, and explained how the sole use of a house was to offer on its lee side shelter from the wind at night; and how furniture was thoughtfully provided that the owners might not be short of firewood. Practical demonstration followed. They slept outside the house, warmed at night by the chairs and tables, until the luxury of civilisation cloyed, when they decamped to the woods.

No unprejudiced person can maintain, except on a very dark night, that the aboriginal's appearance is improved by clothes. Our artist's pen has fondly dealt with a congenial subject, yet the picture on the next page is unconvincing. Strange as it may appear, booksellers affirm that not a single copy of "Sartor Resartus" has ever been purchased by an aboriginal. Even the "Nineteenth Century Classics" edition failed to please him.

Whence the aborigines came has never been satisfactorily determined. They seem

AN ENCAMPMENT OF ABORIGINES.

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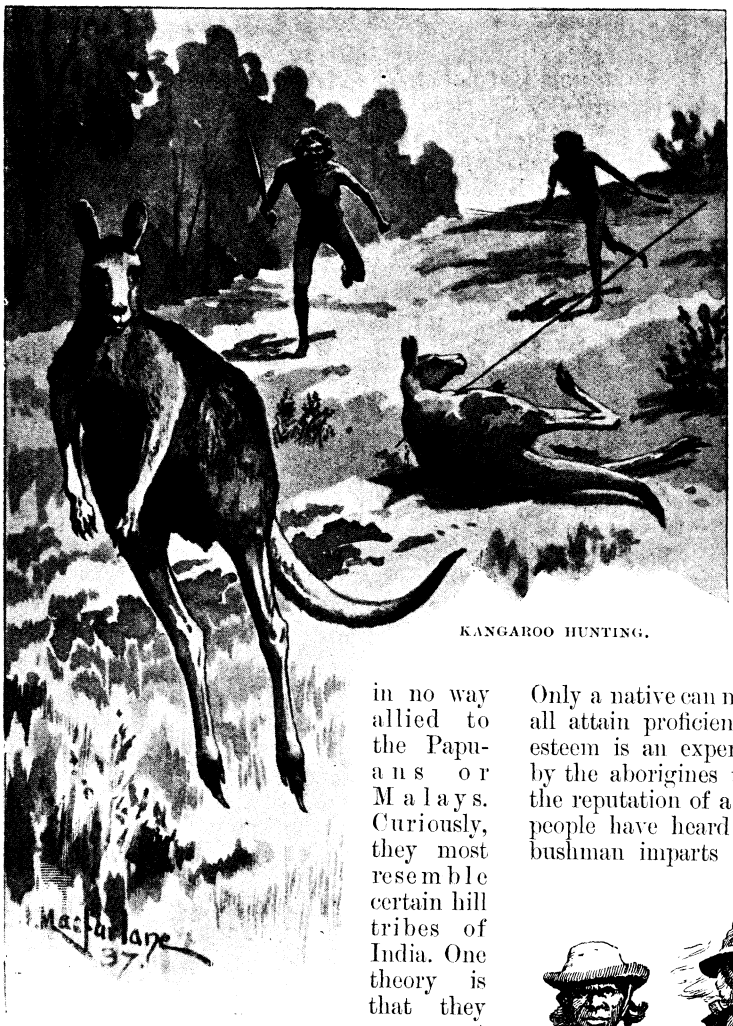

KANGAROO HUNTING.

in no way allied to the Papuans or Malays. Curiously, they most resemble certain hill tribes of India. One theory is that they represent an ancient race which inhabited the Malayan Archipelago until dispossessed by the present occupants. Obviously an accurate census is unobtainable, but it is considered that the aborigines do not aggregate more than 100,000, which number must certainly be taken as a diminishing quantity.

Tasmania lost the last of its native population in 1876, when a woman named Trugania, who had reached the age of seventy-three, died and earned a grim distinction. Although not far distant, the Tasmanian natives bore little or no resemblance to their neighbours on the mainland.

Fond of change and adventure, restless and nomadic, excitable to a degree, lazy, dirty, and offensively odoriferous, occasionally fierce and bloodthirsty, and in his natural state void of the worshipping instinct so generally found in the human species that Benjamin Kidd catalogues it as "the religious phenomenon," the aboriginal takes his position near the low-water mark of humanity. Yet has he characteristics which place him on a plane quite distinct from other savage races. He will always be remembered as the inventor and perfecter of that wonderful instrument the boomerang. Western nations have long been familiar with the peculiar properties of the boomerang, but imitation means failure. Even the ubiquitous American patentee leaves it severely alone. Only a native can make and use it, though not all attain proficiency in either art. In such esteem is an expert boomerang carver held by the aborigines that his fame spreads like the reputation of a Maxim or a Krupp. Most people have heard of the weird powers the bushman imparts to his weapon. On the

ABORIGINES IN A CIVILISED STATE.

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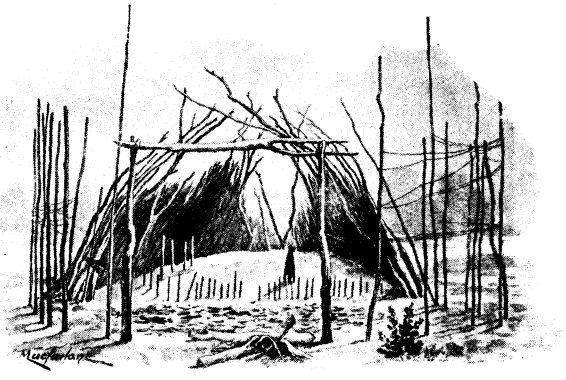
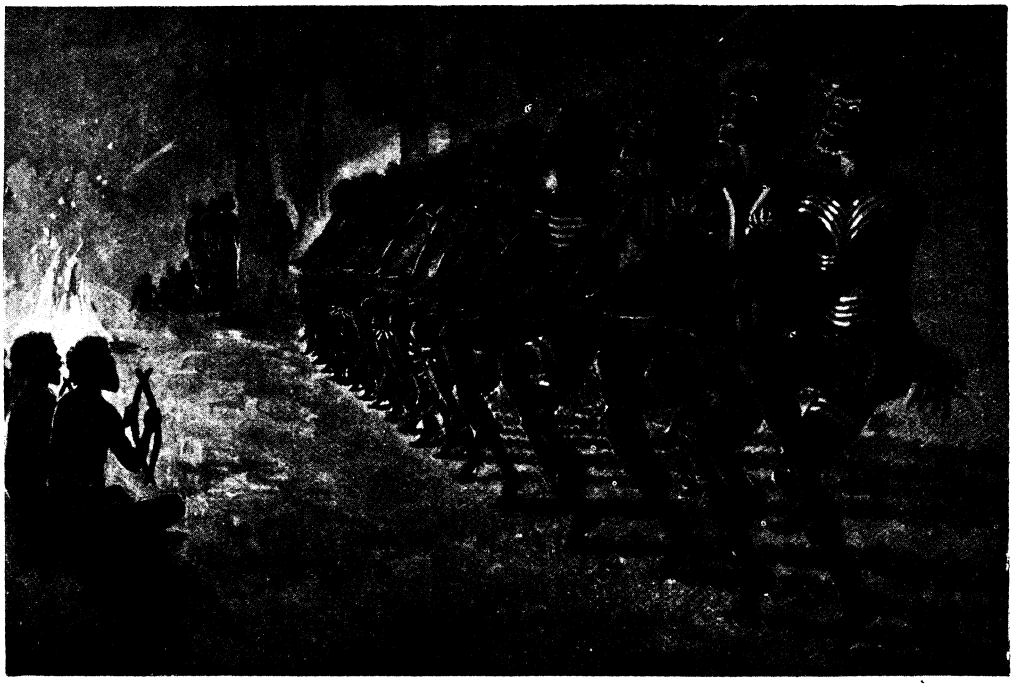
word of an eminent cleric and naturalist, the boomerang when thrown can be made to perform two complete circles in the air, and then actually return to the thrower's hands.

Compared with the boomerang, the spear and waddy-stick are of secondary importance. Although the latter is regarded as an offensive weapon, it is usually reserved for delicate or "fine" work, such as duels, or the settlement of personal and family quarrels. A duel affords a droll study of physical endurance and natural courtesy. The *affaire d'honneur* is conducted on orthodox lines: seconds are chosen, and the place of meeting arranged, each party assuring the other that the remembrance of the insult or the *casus belli* can only be removed with a waddy-stick, casually mentioning at the same time the design and weight of his own weapon.



A NATIVE GRAVE.

The duel then proceeds somewhat on these lines. The aggrieved one bends forward, hands on knees, and invites his opponent to test the soundness of his club on his, the challenger's, head. Politeness does not demand that the vigour of the blow be modified by regrets or remorse; much less such a reply as, "Not at all, sir; after you." The descent of the club is reminded of the conundrum, "Should an irresistible force come in contact with an immovable mass, what is the result?" In this case a little local warmth is generated. It is now the other fellow's turn, and the game proceeds as before, varied by mutual requests to hit a little harder. Either combatant leaves the field without a stain on his character, and tasting the quintessence of satisfied honour, should his opponent's club be broken over his head.



A CORROBOREE.

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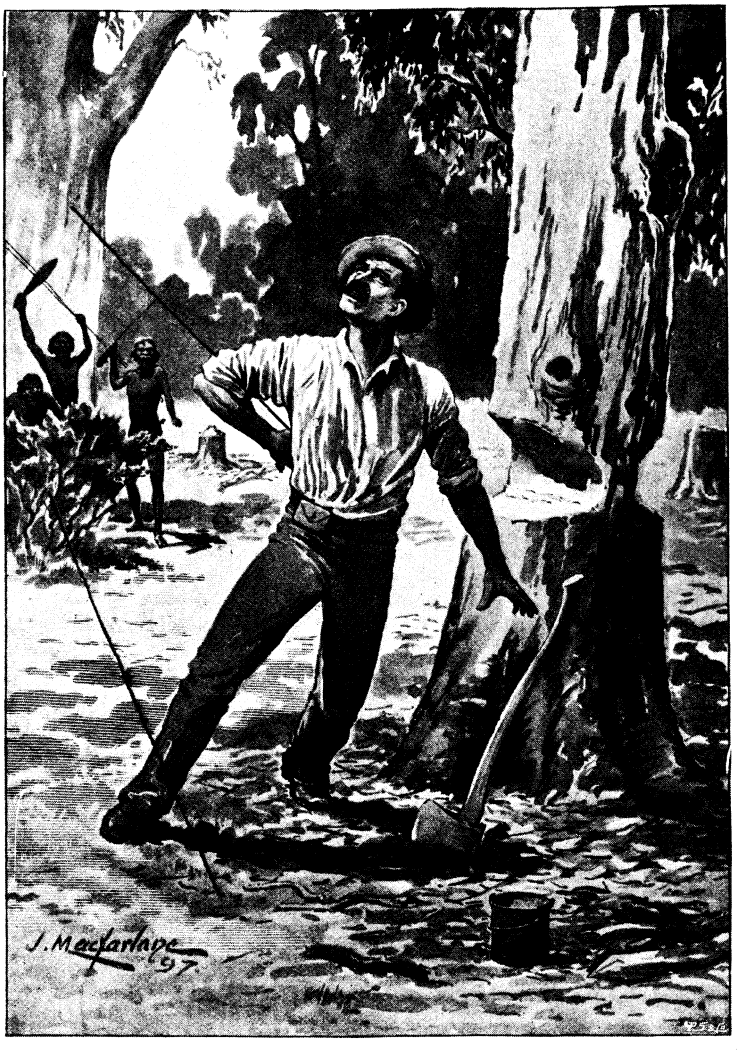
As an instance of the mental stagnation and inactivity of the race may be mentioned the custom of carrying a piece of burning fuel when shifting camp, to save the trouble of rekindling a fire. Some tribes have quite forgotten how to produce fire.

Nature has not endowed the aborigines with a high appreciation of art. This fact gives a still greater value to the weird drawings on the rocks at Sydney. Generally speaking, the blacks take pleasure in music of a kind, and delight in a "corroboree," *i.e.*, a meeting of two tribes for dancing and singing, special attention being given to new works performed for the first time. The name corroboree is also given to the chant or song. In the course of a raid, friendly or otherwise, a tribe may hear snatches of a music-hall ditty sung with variation to suit individual tastes at a mining camp. The air might perhaps please the tribe, who would in their turn alter the same to conform with the unwritten canons of black musical art. Forthwith they decide that so good a thing must be shared with others. Special visits are made to distant parts of the country and the new cantata is performed nightly to applauding crowds.



A SETTLER BEING SPEARED BY BLACKS.

Hunting is the only congenial occupation of the native, and when he has nothing to hunt he helps himself at the huts of settlers. A certain chief known as King "Billy" had quite regal ideas concerning the laws of *meum et tuum*. It is related, however, to his credit that he never borrowed a joint of meat or a blanket without saying to himself, "Well! well! King Billy needs it. It's all King Billy's." This same sable monarch, it is authentically related, had married a white girl to whom he became much attached. Years afterwards, when she died, so great was his grief that he determined her memory should be perpetuated after the white man's custom. A tombstone was procured and erected over her grave. The old gentleman was never tired of exhibiting it to visitors as the most interesting of all his possessions. It bore the following simple and touching inscription—

TO THE MEMORY
OF
MISS SMITH,
WIFE OF
KING BILLY.

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AN ANCIENT CHARITY ORGANISATION SOCIETY,

AN ACCOUNT OF A VISIT TO THE FRANCISCAN CONVENT AT CIMIEZ.

By James Ridout.

Photographs supplied by Mr. A. L. Henderson.

CIMIEZ and the Queen we know, but Cimiez and squalor are not usually mentioned in the same breath. The fact is, the enchanting coast of the Riviera has in most minds become associated only with royalties, highnesses, millionaires, luxury, and life under its brightest aspects. In a spot so richly endowed by Nature, a spot, which fringes with myrtle and orange the graceful curves of the Riviera offers no exception to this unhappily common experience.

Staying at Cimiez, we paid a visit to the Franciscan Convent. It should be noted that such religious homesteads are called "convents," whether the inmates are male

IN THE COURTYARD OF THE FRANCISCAN MONASTERY AT CIMIEZ.

too, where every natural advantage has been enhanced by art, want and misery cannot, it is supposed, find a place. One may, however, be certain that wherever the rich are wont to congregate, there also the poor will be gathered together. This rule obtains in haughty and aristocratic clubland; elegant Paris has its slums, where the communist and the *pétroleuse* are bred, and the paradise or female. The Father Guardian received us with the innate courtesy and self-respecting simplicity one is accustomed to expect from the children of the "poor man of Assisi." Church, house, and grounds were thrown open to us.

The Conventual Church, a mixture of Gothic and Renaissance, is richly but not too lavishly decorated. The choir is behind the

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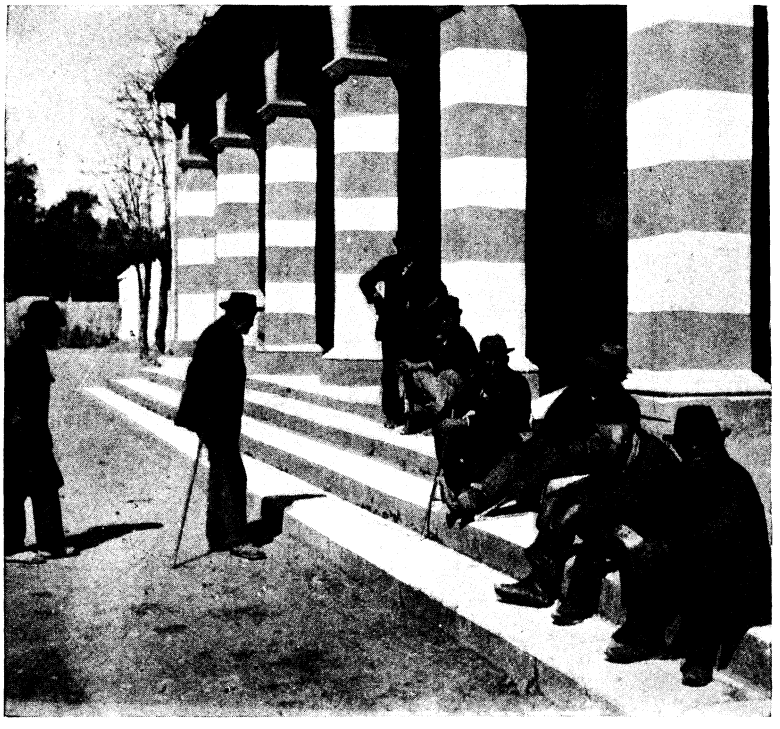
high altar and completely screened from sight by the reredos. Some valuable paintings and folio service books are to be found here, with a fine-toned organ and well-executed carvings.

In the Convent one could not help admiring the paintings in the refectory, one in particular representing the prophet Elias fed by the ravens—a suitable subject for the dining-hall of a house whose inmates depend, like the birds of the air, on the bounty of their heavenly Father and the charity of their fellow men.

Cloisters and gardens were deliciously cool, and we unconsciously contrasted the repose and austere beauty of the Convent garth with the garish attractions and noisy amusements of the madding crowd down by the sea. Here was life, and work, and study, and prayer. Here men laboured and toiled with a definite object in view. Here gold was sought for, but it was the gold with God's hall-mark upon it—a treasure in heaven. Occupation without weariness, sameness without monotony, earnestness without excitement, produced an atmosphere of distinction, health and spirituality, evidenced in the frames and countenances of the simply clad friars.



WAITING FOR THE DAILY DOLE OF FOOD OUTSIDE THE CONVENT.

Our visit was nearly concluded when a chance remark of the excellent cicerone, to whom the Father Guardian had committed us, led us to prolong our stay until the twelve o'clock distribution of food to the poor had taken place. This ceremony, which is of daily occurrence, drew a crowd of indigent men and women, and opened our eyes to the large amount of distress that calls for alleviation even in that favoured region. The sight of the tattered and hungry throng hanging thus on the very skirts of the gay, well-dressed circles of moneyed pleasure-seekers forcibly reminded us of the slave whose duty it was on the day of a Roman triumph to remind the victorious general that all the adulation and deafening applause of which he was the object left him what he was before—a mere mortal man. The same spectacle of wretchedness put us in contact with an interesting work of practical charity that has been in operation at Cimiez for at least three centuries.

In front of the imposing colonnade, standing before the Franciscan Church, a welcome opportunity is afforded to rich and poor to meet together and acknowledge the Maker of them all. Through the humble instrumentality of the friars, poverty is robbed of its sting, and wealth sees its golden stream deflected occasionally from its possessors to their less-favoured brethren.

The accompanying photographs will help the untravelled reader to follow the beneficent operations of this well-organised charitable society, and may induce English-speaking visitors to assist at a quaint and suggestive function, which, perhaps, not one out of a thousand tourists has ever witnessed, for the reason that it takes place at midday and at a distance of three miles from the city.

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ANTICIPATION.

Before the Angelus rings out its noontide summons to remember the mystery of mysteries—the Incarnation of the Word—the steps of the church are already tenanted by the wearied, famished objects for whom the children of the "Seraphic Patriarchs" will presently have kind words, a cheering laugh, and a plentiful meal. An independent, innate monitor evidently anticipates the heavy clang of the Friary bell. When at last it calls you will find a sadly strange collection of human wrecks impatiently waiting the arrival on the scene of the modern representative of "Simon the Cellarer."

With the soldier-like regularity for which religious Orders are famous, the Convent door flies open punctually on the hour, and the provisions for the *al fresco* repast are brought out by the brown-habited friars. A large pot contains some juicy and fragrant *ragoût*; it is placed on the ground, and pannikins, platters, and spoons outflank it. Every movement of the waiters is watched by the guests—the size of the bowls, the vigour and consistency of the ascending column of steam. They are epicures in a way, these famished children of misfortune. Poor as they are, they do not feed; they eat.

A blessing is asked from the Giver of all good things—a much shorter blessing than that which is being recited at the same moment over the friars' own meagre pittance within the Convent enclosure.

PREPARATION.

REALISATION.

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PREPARING FOR EASTER.

Brief, however, though it be, the ordeal of the "grace before meat" is evidently most trying to the internal organism of the recipients of these alms. The reason is not far to seek. The balmy breeze which invariably rises at midday in the Riviera, though it blow from the "Baie des Anger," crosses the good "brother's" pot in its passage, and so becomes laden with savoury suggestions under which it is not perhaps rash or uncharitable to believe devotion is apt to pass on one knows not whither.

The distribution of hot, tasty food is proceeded with straightway. No one is overlooked. No favouritism is shown. There is no stint in the quantity, no lack of heartiness in the bestowing. Devotedness to their chosen work seems to have overcome in the hearts of these simple friars what would in most others arouse feelings of utter repugnance. The familiar dealings with such an unsavoury and free-mannered group as their kindly office involves produce no weariness or irritation on these practical believers in the Beatitude, "Blessed are the poor." With cheerful face and uplifting word these deeply submerged souls are welcomed and helped.

Some of the mendicants are well known to the Convent authorities. Their portion remains nevertheless undiminished, and they are served with the same alacrity as any new-comer. These *habitués* are wont to put questions to the friars, partly out of curiosity,

THE MONKS' KITCHEN.

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but partly, too, we think, to inspire the casual beggar with a due sense of the questioner's standing and acquaintance with the manners of the house.

"How is Brother Juniper?" one will ask, with every sign of profound interest in the cook's state of health. "Does the new cooking range work well? It ought to warm the victuals pretty quickly when the coal is alight. I know it warmed me when I helped to push it up the hill. Never felt hotter in my life."

The questioner is informed that his friend the cook is doing well, and has all the intricacies of the new kitchen range at his fingers' ends.

The advent of a donkey and cart belonging to the Friary turns the conversation. The condition of the beast is commented on. Some think he is not so strong as Jules was, his predecessor in Franciscan harness. Doubts are entertained as to his being able to bring up to the Convent those heavy loads of palms and shrubs required for the Easter decorations. So the tide of chat flows on till platter and spoon are thoroughly scoured by methods peculiar to the mendicant tribe. All the food has been given out, the big copper is empty, and appetite has become a thing of the past. With thanks to the good God, and grateful words to the dispensers of His benefits, the crowd dissolves.

The religious are not forgetful that the means at their disposal for the relief of the poor are committed to them in trust, as to almoners. They are also well versed in the obliquities of human nature *in extremis*. Each case is treated upon a basis previously settled. If a new suppliant appears, he must first withdraw for a conference with the "Father," at whose hands he may expect a shrewd, close examination. If he prove his claim to *forma pauperis*, he will receive his daily rations free. If he avow (and he had better do so at once before such a keen judge of physiognomy) that he is a "gentleman beggar," he will be charged a penny a day.

THE FRANCISCANS' CHAPEL.

This charitable organisation has weathered the religious, political, and social storms of the past three hundred years. It is unlikely that the French Government will interfere with a work of philanthropy which no other body could conduct so economically. The friars are relieving officers without salaries, and, with the exception of the sordid souls who give to nothing, every householder in the district considers it a pleasure to give a considerable amount of the materials which are put to such profitable account by the brothers.

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STORIES OF THE GOLD STAR LINE.

By L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace.

Illustrated by Adolf Thiede.

IV.—IN THE JAW OF THE DOG.

A FEW days before the Christmas of 1891 the *North Star* dropped her anchor at Tilbury. She was not to leave again before the 6th of January, so I had what was, for me, a fairly long spell ashore. I was debating in my mind where I should spend it, when I found a letter at my club from a lady whom I happened to know very well. It ran as follows:—

The Red Grange,
Clapham.

Dear Mr. Conway,

I hope you have not forgotten our pleasant intercourse of last year. I have just seen by the papers that the *North Star* has arrived at Tilbury. If you are not already engaged for Christmas, I wish you would come to the Grange and spend it with us. We shall have a large party, and the great Mr. Moss Rucher, to whom my daughter Violet is engaged, will be with us. Please wire on receipt of this.

Yours very truly,
HELEN HARLEY.

I turned this letter over many times before replying to it. I had never cared much for Mrs. Harley, who was a shallow and somewhat artificial person. I had met her at more than one smart gathering in the previous summer and had formed very decided opinions with regard to her. Her daughter Violet, on the other hand, I admired extremely. She appeared to me to be all that her mother was not—sincere, gentle, affectionate, with a sweet manner and a great deal of earnestness about her. She was clever, too, and well educated, but she was not the sort of girl to intrude her knowledge in an unpleasant way. I could fancy a man loving her very much, and guessed, at the time of our last meeting, that the man of all others for her had already appeared on the scene. He was a certain Charlie Bruce, a rising doctor and a great toxicologist. Bruce was a handsome fellow, and he and Violet looked as attractive a pair, when they were seen together, as the heart could desire. It needed but to glance at her face, with its glowing colour, at her dark bright eyes and sweet mouth, to know how sincerely she was attached to Bruce.

No binding words had been spoken yet between the pair, but I expected to hear of their engagement any moment. My surprise, therefore, was very great to learn from her mother's letter that Violet Harley was engaged to Mr. Moss Rucher. Mr. Rucher, the new millionaire—Money Rucher, as they called him in the City—was, of course, well known to me. His immense fortune had been derived from successfully floating some large companies in the West Australian goldfields under the name of the Rucher Syndicate. He frequently travelled by our line to Albany, in West Australia, but had never been in the same ship as myself. I had heard nothing either for or against the man except that he was an astute financier, a synonym, however, nowadays for a person of no very refined scruples. In age he must have been between forty and fifty, and how, even from that point of view, pretty Violet, who was barely eighteen, could think of him, puzzled me a good deal.

Curiosity about her, and a certain dogged wish to know the rights of the case, induced me, therefore, to accept Mrs. Harley's invitation.

I arrived at Clapham the following evening and was surprised to find Bruce waiting for me at the station. The moment I glanced at his face I noticed a serious change there.

"Violet thought you might arrive by this train," he said at once, "so I came to meet you. I wanted to say that I am going out with you to Australia on the 6th."

"For a trip?" I asked.

"No, for good. I am sick of this country. The chances for a medical man here, unless he can buy a share in a good practice, are but poor, and I mean to start a fresh life in a place in New South Wales where I have heard of an opening."

"Well," I cried, "this is news, indeed. How completely you have changed your mind! I remember you said last year that nothing would induce you to leave London."

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"But last year and this are different," was his reply. Then he added, dropping his voice, "Although we have not met so very often, I feel inclined to trust you, Conway. The fact is this—I have lost the only thing worth staying for. Have you heard that Miss Harley is engaged to Mr. Rucher?"

"Her mother mentioned it when she sent me my invitation. What is the man like?"

of things are not done at the end of the nineteenth century. Besides, Miss Harley has too much character. I doubt if her mother could compel her to do anything she did not cordially approve of herself."

"You cannot tell what pressure may be put upon a young girl. Violet has strong affections and is deeply attached to her mother, worthless as I believe the woman to be. I happen to know that Mrs. Harley's financial affairs have been for a long time in a

"'I am so glad to see you, Mr. Conway.'"

"You will see him when you get to the Grange; the thing is scandalous."

"Are not you coming with me?"

"No; I doubt if I should be welcome. Mrs. Harley knows what my feelings are for Violet, and does her best to keep us apart."

"What do you mean by the thing being scandalous?"

"Well, in the first place, there is not the least doubt that Violet is marrying the man under pressure."

"Oh, impossible!" I cried; "these sort very critical state, and I am pretty sure that she is under a great obligation to Mr. Rucher. Anyhow, one thing is abundantly plain—Violet does not care two straws for him; indeed, I believe she dislikes him."

"You are cut up about this, old fellow," I said, "and look at the matter through blue spectacles. I sincerely trust you are wrong. I will own, however, that Miss Harley's engagement has disappointed me. I had hoped——"

"Don't say any more," he cried. "When

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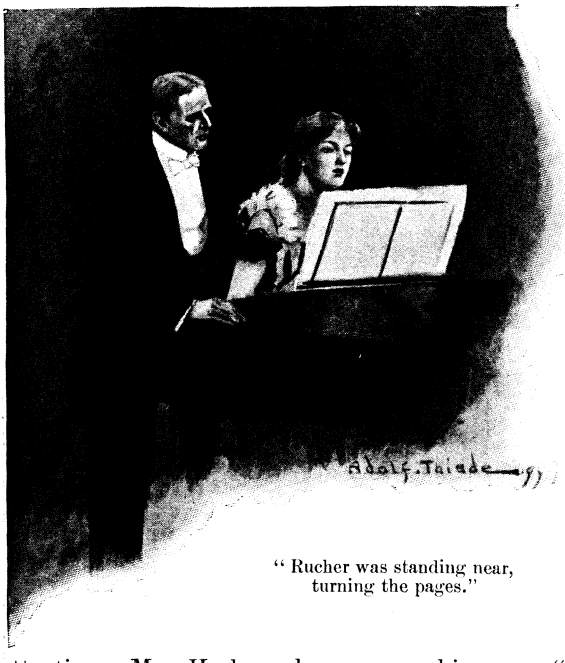
I think of the marriage my blood boils. When I look at her face I sometimes feel that I shall lose my senses."

A few moments later I found myself walking up the avenue towards the Red Grange, an old house which at one time must have been in the heart of the country, but was now closely surrounded by modern villas.

Mrs. Harley received me with much cordiality, but I did not see Violet or the rest of the guests until just before dinner.

When I entered the large outer drawing-room I noticed that several people, all strangers to me, were present. A tall, heavily built man was standing on the hearthrug. His face immediately arrested my attention. Mrs. Harley, who was near him, beckoned me to her side.



"Rucher was standing near, turning the pages."

"Mr. Conway," she said, a sparkle in her light blue eyes; "let me introduce you to my special friend, Mr. Moss Rucher."

I bowed an acknowledgment and fixed my eyes on the man's face. As I did so my heart sank. Was pretty, gentle little Violet to be sacrificed to an individual more than double her age, and who bore all over his face traces of a career the reverse of honourable? In his small, deep-set, and shifty eyes, his thin upper lip and lantern jaws, I read both cruelty and avarice. The man was well dressed and spoke with a certain evidence of good breeding, but with all his efforts he could not keep the soul which guided him quite below the surface. The meanness of that indwelling spirit shone in his eyes and reflected its emotions round those lips which could be, if the occasion warranted, so cruel.

"Before God!" I murmured under my breath, "Bruce is right; no girl would marry such a man were she not forced to do so. What can the mother mean?"

I was so taken aback that it was with some difficulty I could conceal my surprise by the usual conventional remarks.

"It was good of you to come, Mr. Conway," said my hostess, breaking the somewhat awkward pause with a silly and nervous laugh. "I wonder where Violet can be; she will be delighted to see you, and I have been so anxious to introduce you to Mr. Rucher."

"I have often travelled by your line, sir," said Rucher, now favouring me with a more attentive glance.

I was about to reply when I saw his eyes fixed on a distant door; I looked in the same direction and saw Violet. She came slowly up to where I was standing, and as she approached I saw Rucher's eyes twinkle with suppressed satisfaction. I disliked him for this expression more than ever. The young girl gave him a faint smile and then held out her hands to me.

"I am so glad to see you, Mr. Conway," she cried. "Mother, I hope that you have arranged that Mr. Conway takes me to dinner; I sha'n't go with anyone else."

"Come, come, Violet," said Mr. Rucher, "you forget yourself—that is my privilege." He spoke with a sort of heavy attempt at a joke, but I read displeasure in his glance.

"It is not your privilege to-night," she answered. "Mr. Conway is an old friend, and I am going to give him my company during dinner."

Rucher's cheeks flamed with an angry colour; he turned away from Violet and addressed Mrs. Harley.

"Come and stand in this window," said the girl to me; "the night is quite warm."

We crossed to the deep embrasure of a bay window—here she immediately lowered her voice.

"I asked Charlie Bruce to meet you at the station; did I guess the right train?"

"Yes," I answered; "I hoped that Bruce was staying in the house."

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"Oh, no; he went back to London after seeing you here."

"He is much changed," I said.

Her pretty lips trembled; her eyes, wide open, clear and beautiful, fixed themselves without the least embarrassment on my face.

"He will be quite well when he goes to Australia," she said slowly; "he is very clever and will make a career for himself. Now, please, let us talk of something else."

The dinner signal was given and a moment later I found myself at Violet's side at a long and brilliantly decorated dining-table. As soon as the conversation had become general she dropped her voice and turned to me.

"He is going out in your ship," she said.

I did not need to inquire whom she meant.

"Yes," I answered.

"Perhaps you will see him sometimes in Australia?"

"Scarcely likely. He tells me that he is going to a place in New South Wales, quite away from the coast."

As I spoke I looked at her, saw that she was only playing with her food, and suddenly made up my mind to speak.

"Your engagement to Mr. Rucher has taken me by surprise," I said.

"Why should it?" she answered. "I am supposed to be making a very good match."

I was silent.

"Don't you think so?" she continued.

I looked at her and replied slowly—

"If having plenty of money means a good match, you are right, Miss Harley. If to secure happiness is a good match, then I don't think you are about to make it."

She turned very pale.

"I felt when you were coming that you would say something of this kind," she said; "you take Charlie's part."

"I do," I said boldly; "you love him and you ought to marry him."

"A girl cannot always think of herself. But please do not say any more; you will upset me. It is necessary that I should marry Mr. Rucher; I do it for——"

"For your mother's sake."

"You know too much, Mr. Conway, but I will answer you bravely. Yes, I do it for mother's sake. This thing means her happiness. Charlie will get over it some day, and I—well, the approval of one's conscience must go a good way towards securing a contented mind."

"In this case your conscience ought not to approve; but, as you say, it is no business of mine."

"I did not say so, but please do not let us talk of it any more just now. Girls cannot always please themselves, and I—I am not sorry."

"I must add one thing, and then I promise to drop the subject," I replied. "Your motives are mistaken; you are doing evil that good may come. That sort of thing never answered and never will."

Her next-door neighbour turned at this moment to speak to Miss Harley. She replied with a certain eagerness, and for the rest of dinner scarcely spoke a word to me.

Just before I retired for the night she found her way again to my side.

"How long are you going to stay?" she asked.

"To-morrow will be Christmas Day; I shall leave the day after."

"To-morrow," she said—"I shall be occupied all to-morrow; I may not have another opportunity. I wonder if you will promise me something."

"Certainly."

"Then look after Charlie during the voyage; do what you can to cheer him up." Tears brimmed into her eyes. Just at that moment Mrs. Harley's voice was heard.

"Violet! Violet! where are you?" she said. "Mr. Rucher wants you to sing the 'Canadian Boat Song' again."

She left me without a word. The next moment her sweet voice filled the room. Rucher was standing near, turning the pages of her music. I felt sick at heart.

I saw hardly anything of Miss Harley the next day, and never for a moment alone. Early the following morning I left the Grange, and on the 6th of January Bruce and I started for Australia. Violet's wedding was, I understood, to take place soon. I resolved to say as little as possible of the matter to my friend.

During the early part of the voyage we met with rough weather, and my time was occupied with the wants of the different passengers; but shortly after leaving Colombo my duties became less heavy, and Bruce now constantly sought my company. I saw by his face that he was longing to unburden himself, and one night as we paced up and down he began to speak.

"It is terrible," he said, "that there is no law to prevent such abominable things."

"What do you mean?" I answered.

"You must know to what I am alluding—to Violet's marriage, to the fact that the whole future happiness of her life is at stake. She is too noble a girl to see her mother

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ruined and disgraced. There is no saving her, unless that brute Rucher were suddenly to lose all his money; but that would have to happen immediately, as they are to be married so soon. If I could only ruin him—my God! wouldn't I do it!"

"To expose him would be better," I said, speaking quietly.

He looked me full in the face.

"You feel about him as I do," he said.

"I cordially hate the man," I replied.

"Shake hands on that," cried the young fellow. He seized my hand and shook it violently.

"And, after all," I continued, in a meditative voice, "men like Rucher often lose money as quickly as they make it."

"I wish he might lose every penny he ever got. If he could only go smash before the wedding, Violet would be safe; but there is no such luck in store."

I tried to cheer him up as well as I could. After listening to my well-meant attempts at consolation for a few moments, he said in a voice which somehow completely shut me up—

"There's no use in it, Conway; I don't even listen when you attempt commonplace consolations. It is the bitterest pill of my whole life. I have got to swallow it, and, by God! I cannot smile over the thing. If it were only my happiness it would not greatly matter, but she is miserable, too."

"I am afraid she is," I replied; "there is no doubt whatever that she loves you and has not the smallest affection for that scoundrel Rucher."

"Then why, in the name of everything sacred, does she marry him? If I were a girl I wouldn't give myself away to a brute of that sort."

"She does it for her mother's sake."

"That's just it, Conway, and that's where the pull is so hard. The girl is determined to complete the sacrifice, being utterly in the dark as to what she is putting her hand to; and a fellow who would give his life for her has to stand by and do nothing. I tell you it's beastly, and sometimes I feel as if my mind were going."

I was called just then to attend to an immediate duty and left him. I had no more conversation with him on the subject of Violet for the rest of the voyage, and hoped that with all the hard work which lay before him he would partly forget his troubles.

We arrived in Sydney Harbour on Tuesday, the 18th of February, about five o'clock in the evening. Just before we arrived, Bruce came into my cabin to say good-bye. He looked very depressed and said he felt that by leaving the ship he was about to cut his last tie with the Old Country and his past life. He had arranged to go up country immediately, but I promised that if I got time I would see him again before he started.

"Remember one thing," I said, as we shook hands at parting, "there is not a girl on earth who ought to spoil a man's life. Show your affection for Miss Harley by doing the best you can with your life, Bruce."

"Aye, I will try," he answered. "I hope I'll see you again, Conway. I shall put up at the Prince's Hotel, and this is my final address. Send me a line now and then, and when you get home let me know how she is."

I gave him my promise to do this. He had hardly left me when a knock came to my door and a steward entered.

"Captain Meadows wants to see you on deck, sir."

I replied that I would go immediately.

"Ah, Conway," said the skipper when he saw me, "here you are; we are both wanted immediately at the office for some urgent reason; the launch is ready to take us ashore. Come along."

In some surprise I accompanied the skipper. This unusual summons evidently meant something of great importance. We reached the Circular Quay in a few moments and drove at once to the office of our Company in Peter's Street, where we were shown into the private room of the manager, Mr. Aldridge. The moment we entered he closed the door and turned towards us.

"I am sorry to have been obliged to summon you both in such an unusual manner," he said, "but circumstances have arisen which necessitate the *North Star* leaving here on its return voyage at the earliest possible moment. How soon can she unload?"

"Well, her cargo happens to be very little, and with extra hands it could be done in twenty-four hours," replied Captain Meadows. "As far as I know, there are no repairs necessary, so she would be ready for sea again the day after to-morrow, unless there is cargo to come in."

"There will be none. Her ballast will be coal. I have arranged that; and you, Mr. Conway, will please attend to the stores without a moment's delay. This is a very important Government matter; and if the *North Star* cannot be got ready in time

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another liner will be employed, which will mean considerable loss to our Company."

He paused, and we both stared at him. Doubtless our astonishment was visible on our faces.

"I will tell you the exact state of affairs," continued Mr. Aldridge. "It is a matter not only of the greatest importance, but also of the profoundest secrecy. I must pledge you both, therefore, gentlemen, to promise that on no account whatsoever will you divulge to anyone what I am going to say."

We both at once gave our assurances, and I began to feel intensely curious to know what was coming. Mr. Aldridge leant forward in his chair and began to speak in a low tone.

"You have heard, of course, of the great Rucher Syndicate of the West Australian Goldfields?"

An exclamation that I could not repress broke involuntarily from my lips.

He stared at me in some curiosity.

"Perhaps, Mr. Conway, you have been bitten in that direction?"

"No," I answered, "those sort of speculations never tempt me; but I have, of course, heard of the Syndicate—indeed, I may as well own that I am much interested in this matter." Then, as he still continued to stare at me as if in alarm, I went on, "I happen to know someone who is also deeply interested in the Rucher Syndicate."

"Then I am truly sorry for him, and I am equally sorry for you, for by the promise you have just made me you have bound yourself not to inform him of the monstrosity of the whole scheme. It is simply a hideous imposture, a modern South Sea Bubble."

"What?" I exclaimed.

"Yes, it is a big financial swindle, and the exposure of the whole affair depends on our bringing safely to England one of the gang who is going to turn Queen's evidence. On this man's evidence in London the whole lot will be convicted, and the exposure will include I hardly dare to say how many men of reputed integrity who are involved in it. It will be a revelation to the public. The Treasury have entrusted us to bring this man home. He is at present under the closest police escort, and two detectives will travel with him. You see now what a serious matter it is; but what makes it far more serious is that the authorities fear that the whole circumstance of his betrayal will leak out, and if that is the case you may be sure that the rascals, with their reputation at stake and with enormous resources at their command, won't leave a stone unturned to prevent him arriving in England alive. They will stop at nothing. However, once on board he will be safe enough, as every precaution will be taken here that no one but those with unquestionable credentials will be allowed to go home by the *North Star*. Our agents at every port of call on the way will be advised, and it will be your business, Mr. Conway, to aid the authorities in every possible manner, and yours, Captain Meadows, to see that the ship is ready to sail the day after to-morrow, or, at latest, early

"Strapping a large portmanteau."

on Friday morning. The arrangements are these. It will be given out to-morrow that Mr. Dixon Boys intends going overland to Albany to inspect the goldfields, or on some such business. This, of course, will be false, and on Thursday evening he will be secretly and quickly taken down to the *North Star* just before she is ready to sail. Any fresh instructions will be sent to you, Captain Meadows."

"I will do my best, Mr. Aldridge," he replied; "and the sooner I set to work the better."

We took our leave. The captain returned to the ship, and I, hailing a hansom, drove off in great haste to the Prince's Hotel.

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Fortune had turned with a vengeance. If Violet Harley's marriage could be delayed until after we got home, her mother's game would be put a stop to. How best to achieve this was the problem which now exercised my mind almost to the exclusion of anything else.

On reaching the hotel I heard that Bruce was in his room and went up to him at once. I found him surrounded by a miscellaneous assortment of luggage. He had just finished

"Hauled up the gangway by its collar."

his final packing and was strapping a large portmanteau. As I entered he looked up.

"Hallo! Conway," he cried; "so you have come to see the last of me. I am off in half an hour to Wallengabba."

"No, Bruce, you are not," I answered, sitting down opposite to him.

He stared at me in blank surprise.

"What on earth do you mean?" was his reply.

I laid my hand on his shoulder.

"My dear boy," I said, "I am going to ask a big thing of you."

"Anything in my power," he replied, fixing his frank and still boyish eyes on my face.

"I want you to trust me completely."

"Trust you? I believe I do, Conway."

"I want you to trust me to the extent of throwing up that appointment of yours and returning with me in the *North Star* to England."

"Now, what do you mean?" he cried.

"I cannot explain, Bruce, and that is where your faith must come in. I believe that to your dying day you will never regret it. Just at the present moment I am so full of hope about you that I scarcely dare to express myself. You are wanted in England, and that place at Wallengabba must do without you."

"But you surely will tell me something more?" he cried. "I have spent money on this thing. I have said good-bye to all my friends, and Violet is lost to me. Do you mean," he continued, suddenly springing to his feet, "do you mean that that brute has lost his money? How? Quick, tell me."

"I cannot," I answered; "I am bound by a solemn promise. You must trust me and come home as it were in the dark, or you must go your own way."

He reeled back for a moment and I almost thought he would fall.

"Conway, you drive me nearly mad; but I—yes, of course, I trust you. Are you quite certain that I shall never regret this step?"

"As certain as man can be."

"I cannot live in the same country as Violet when she becomes Rucher's wife." He stared into my face as he spoke, then he took a step forward. "Do you mean—do you mean to imply that she will never be his wife?"

"I can say nothing," I answered. "Cancel your ticket, Bruce, and take your passage in the *North Star*. I will see that you get a berth."

"But can there be any doubt about that?" he asked in some surprise.

"Unless you are guaranteed by me, yes; but do what I say and don't ask questions. Now, then, which is it to be?"

"I have no choice in the matter; you put it so that I cannot refuse. I fail to understand you, but I will go with you."

"You will never regret it, old chap; and now I must be off, for I have a tremendous lot to do, as we shall leave at the latest on Thursday night. Don't breathe a word of this to anyone at the hotel, keep your own

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counsel; the darker the thing is kept the better for our success."

"You may rely on me, Conway. This is all a complete upheaval, and I do not think I quite realise it, but at any rate I will do as you say and come on board to-morrow."

"By the way," I said, as I left the room, "can you tell me the exact date of Miss Harley's wedding?"

"The 15th of April; I remember it only too well."

I considered for a moment.

"We shall be home in time," I said then, and without waiting to read the expression on his face I hurriedly left him.

The news of our intended departure had evidently been already communicated to the crew, and when I reached the ship the greatest activity was manifest everywhere. My own work occupied me all day and nearly all night. Charlie Bruce came on board on Thursday afternoon, but I had not an instant to speak to him. We were ready to sail at ten o'clock that evening, and a few moments before the hour of starting Boys made his appearance. He was a quiet, slender, timorous-looking man, with sunken brown eyes and a long, cadaverous face. About his clean-shaven mouth was an expression at once of weakness and of obstinacy. He glanced round him in a half-frightened way, but I was relieved to see that he had not only the manners but the appearance of a gentleman. It was absolutely necessary that he should come on board as an ordinary passenger, and the detectives who accompanied him were supposed by the crew to be, one his private secretary and the other his servant. He was accommodated with a special cabin to himself and every comfort was given to him.

Boys had scarcely crossed the gangway, and under the escort of the two detectives was making his way towards the companion, before the *North Star*, without a single indication, or any signal to say that we were starting, slipped her moorings and quietly glided out of the harbour. As we cleared the promontory and I saw the harbour lights grow dimmer and dimmer behind us, I owned to a feeling of relief. The tension and strain and half-expectancy of some impossible disaster happening at the last moment had told upon me more than I cared to own, but now at last we were safe and I went below at once, for I needed a long sleep badly.

That there was something mysterious connected with our trip, and that this mystery in some unaccountable way surrounded Mr. Dixon Boys, the small number of our return passengers were evidently aware. But what that mystery was they could not possibly divine, as the secret was only known to Captain Meadows, the chief officer, and myself. All speculations were therefore fruitless. The prisoner was allowed every possible liberty and soon made friends with more than one of his fellow-passengers. Bruce in especial often sought the company of Dixon Boys, engaging him in long and earnest conversation. On one occasion, soon after we had started, he gave me his opinion very frankly with regard to our fellow-traveller.

"I cannot make him out," he said; "he is interesting, but also queer. The slightest thing makes him start as though he were pursued by some imaginary foe. Then he will tell me nothing about himself. I never saw anyone so reserved and yet apparently so unreserved. He begins to make a confidence and then breaks off abruptly. If ever a man seemed to have something weighing heavily on his mind, he is the person."

"Don't try to draw him out, that's all," I said. "The fact is, Bruce, the less you have to do with Boys the better."

Bruce looked at me with curiosity. After a long pause he said abruptly—

"I wonder if I have been wise in throwing up my appointment. I have sunk a thousand pounds in it—I shall never see that money again."

"Ask me a week after we have landed my true opinion on that point," was my answer. "I cannot say any more at present."

"You puzzle me very nearly as much as Boys does, Conway. Ah, there he is; I shall go and have a smoke with him."

Day after day went by. We were steadily going northwards at our fullest speed. On the 5th of March we arrived at Colombo, but only stopped for an hour for the mails and again hastened on. It was, I remember, about ten o'clock on a moonless night—the exact date by the ship's log was the 8th of March, and our position latitude 11° 23′ east, longitude 61° 5′ north, nearly the centre of the Indian Ocean. Charlie Bruce and I were sitting together in the stern beneath the awning. The air was clear, as it only can be clear in the tropics. Except for a regular swell, the surface of the sea was as oil and smooth as a millpond. My companion moved restlessly, and I knew well from his manner the subject which was uppermost in his mind. Our conversation was broken by long pauses. Once I heard

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Bruce utter an impatient sigh. Moved by an impulse I laid my hand on his shoulder.

"I am sorry for you, old fellow," I said. "I know this waiting in the dark is hard; but, unless some absolutely impossible and improbable accident happens, take my word for it that everything will be right."

"Accident!" he cried; "how mysterious you are! What possible accident can happen?"

I was silent. He edged closer to me.

"If ever a man held a secret," he began, "Dixon Boys is the man."

"You think so?" I said cautiously.

"Think so—I am certain of it. I never saw anyone so wretched."

"He has not been confiding in you, Bruce?"

"No, I almost wish he had. I sometimes wonder if Boys holds my fortune in the hollow of his hand."

I did not reply. Bruce had guessed the truth, but my promise prevented my enlightening him.

"You will know all when you get home," I said, after a long pause; "but do not encourage Boys to make confidences."

"Then there is something special about him?"

"Yes, Charlie; but it is unfair to press me any more."

I had scarcely said the words when the look-out Lascar in the forecastle sounded his gong with a double blow, thus announcing a light on the port bow. The clang had scarcely died away on the still air when the deep boom of a gun reverberated across the sea.

We were on our feet in a moment and ran forward just in time to see a rocket towering up in a fiery line straight ahead of us. It burst in a shower of stars that floated down and died out one by one.

"By Jove! there's a ship in distress," I cried; "I wonder who she is."

The sound of the gun had brought the passengers hurrying on deck. I heard an order shouted from the bridge, and the next moment our whistle sounded, accompanied by an answering rocket.

"Who is she, captain?" I asked, as the skipper hurried past us.

"I don't know yet; some miserable tramp, I suppose," was his quick answer; "but we shall see directly."

We made straight for her, and as we drew near we could see that she was a small steam yacht, about five hundred tons, and evidently sinking fast—so fast, indeed, that we could almost see her taffrail nearing the water-line each moment. Not an instant was to be lost, and two lifeboats and the gig were lowered. They were only just in time, for before they were halfway back to the *North Star* with the crew, we saw the vessel heel over, and with a loud explosion that hid her for a moment in a cloud of steam, she plunged head down and disappeared in a vortex of broken water.

The excitement was intense, for it was evident that had we been a few moments later she would have gone down with all hands.

By this time the gangway had been lowered and the rescued men were coming on board. Their appearance was certainly not prepossessing, and belied the evanescent glimpse we had caught of their apparently aristocratic vessel. A more cut-throat, blackguard-looking set of men I had seldom seen. There was not a decent-looking fellow amongst them. The last to come on board was the skipper, a foreigner, from his appearance. He was accompanied by an ill-favoured mongrel, which he hauled up the gangway by its collar. He gave his name as Nicola Marini, and told us that he was a Sicilian by birth. He spoke English fluently, however, and was able to explain the nature of their disaster. The name of the vessel, he said, was the *Seagull*, a private yacht purchased from a gentleman in England by a Parsee. Marini and his crew were taking her to Bombay. They had, he said, six hours ago struck a derelict and sprung some of their bow plates, and though all hands had ceaselessly worked the pumps, nothing could save her.

I made arrangements at once for the accommodation of our unlooked-for passengers. To my surprise the skipper, Marini, announced his intention of taking his dog with him to his cabin. I protested against this, and after some heated words, in which I told him that it would be contrary to our regulations, he submitted with a surly expression of dissatisfaction, and the brute was consigned to the care of the butcher. The dog was as ugly and ill-favoured a creature as I had ever seen, with bloodshot eyes and a snarling expression.

As soon as the excitement had settled down a little, and the passengers had retired to their berths, I went to my own cabin. Eight bells had gone, and I was just about to turn in when Captain Meadows entered. His face was peculiarly grave and stern.

"Everything all right?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," I replied. "I have quartered

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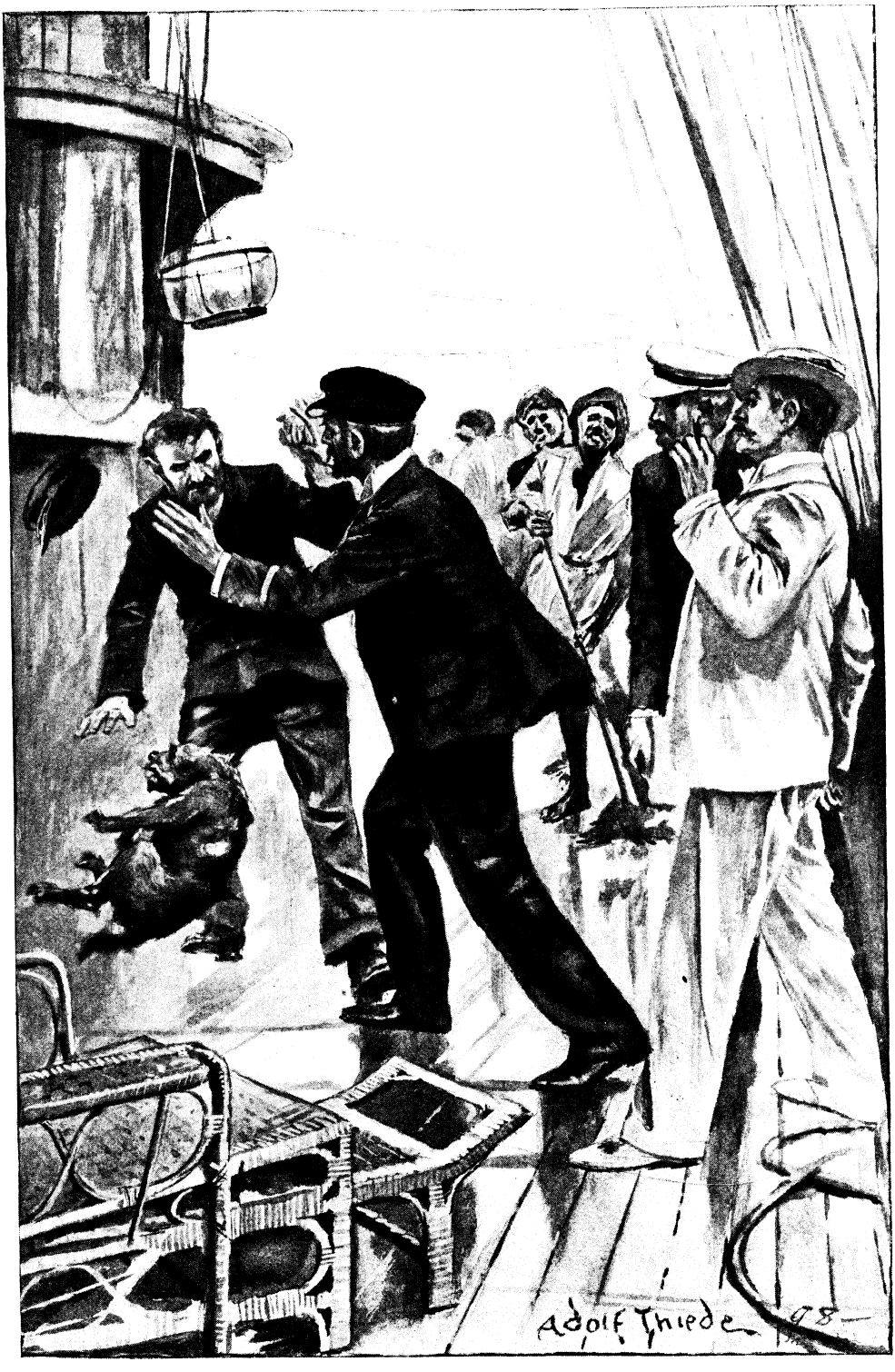

"Hurled him back against the mast."

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them in the second saloon; I suppose we shall have to take them back to England."

"I suppose so," he said. "What do you think of them, Conway?"

"A pretty queer lot, from the look of them," I answered.

"Yes," he replied, "about as queer as their yarn about the derelict. Between you and me, I don't believe a word of it—it is the most impossible story I have ever listened to. I cannot make it out a bit."

"But what do you suppose struck the yacht?" I asked in some surprise

He shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't know; it's a mystery."

"There might have been a derelict drifting about," was my slow reply.

"Might! Very much might," he retorted. "I don't want to be over-suspicious, but you know whom we have got on board."

"You mean Dixon Boys?"

He nodded.

I started up and stared at him as I caught the drift of his thoughts.

"You mean that it is a plant, a put-up job? Impossible!" I said, aghast at his unspoken suggestion.

"Who knows? there are millions at stake; it is as likely as not."

"How could they have done it?" I cried.

"What easier? They knew our track. They had only to wait for us, send up a rocket, and, directly we answered it, scuttle the boat. We should be bound to take them in. More unlikely things have happened before now," he went on. "In any case, Conway, I want you to be closely on the look-out. I have warned the chief officer and told him what I think. I may be wrong, of course, but it won't do to allow our wits to slumber for a single moment now. All I say is, watch them."

He left me with these words, and I sat on the edge of my bunk thinking matters over. It would certainly never have occurred to me that any men, however desperate, would resort to such a method of waylaying a victim on the high seas. Still, the skipper was a man who rarely said anything without good reason, and it behoved me to give his words every consideration.

I passed a wakeful night. If Captain Meadows's suspicions were correct, not only was the life of our prisoner in jeopardy, and the exposure of the whole Rucher Syndicate likely to be foiled, but also the happiness of Bruce and Violet Harley would be imperilled. The issues dependent on Boys's life were certainly heavy.

I got up early and went on deck. The Lascars were still washing and cleaning, and I had scarcely reached my accustomed seat before Bruce and Boys joined me. It was their custom to do so every morning while in the tropics, and on this occasion they both showed unwonted excitement. The occurrence of the previous evening began to be discussed eagerly.

"The crew of the *Seagull* had a narrow shave," said Boys, lighting a cheroot.

"They had, indeed," I replied; "another ten minutes and I would not have given much for their chances."

"How are the men this morning?" asked Bruce.

"I have not seen anything of them yet," I replied. "Hallo! though, here comes the skipper with that brute of a mongrel."

As I spoke the words the man who had just mounted the ladder from the mizzen hatchway came sauntering towards us. I had seldom seen a more ill-favoured looking individual; with his swarthy complexion, irregular features and bull-dog head, and a cast in one eye, he looked as if no evil work would be too bad for him.

"Good morning, gentlemen," he said, coming up and seating himself unbidden in a chair close to us.

As I looked at him the force of the skipper's words came strongly upon me.

"Come here and lie down, Juan," he called to the dog. The animal had been edging up to us snarling. He now crouched at his master's feet, blinked his bloodshot eyes at him, and cowered down.

"What sort of animal do you call that?" asked Boys, regarding the dog with unmistakable disfavour.

"He is not much to look at, I confess," laughed the man; "but I couldn't leave him to drown. He's been a faithful friend to me, and as to tricks, why he's half human. See here. Get up and walk round, Juan." As he spoke he gave the dog a savage kick with his foot. The brute never stirred but gave a surly growl.

"You won't, won't you? Too lazy, eh?" cried Captain Marini, flying into an instant passion. He caught the poor animal by the scruff of the neck and began to beat him unmercifully with his clenched fist.

"Here, stop that, you scoundrel!" cried Boys, his eyes flashing with rage at the brutal cruelty. "Stop it, or I'll——" He made a sudden dash forward, and the dog, now goaded to fury, and as if to protect his

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master, flew at Boys and bit him savagely just below the knee.

Marini, now in a perfect fury, seized the animal in both hands, and holding him up high above his head ran to the side to throw him overboard. But before he could carry out this most brutal act I had leapt across his path and hurled him back against the mast, while the dog ran howling down the deck.

The noise of the scuffle brought Captain

"See you keep the brute safe," were his final words.

Leading Juan by a chain which had been brought on deck, the quartermaster disappeared down the hatchway.

"It is time for us to think of you, Boys," I said, turning to the injured man. "I hope the dog did not hurt you much?"

"Oh, nothing very bad," was his reply. He was standing up, looking pale, but quite composed.

"Injected something into his arm."

Meadows from his cabin, and in a few words, interrupted by Marini's angry expostulations, I explained the situation. The skipper's face paled as I spoke, and he gave me a glance of reproach which I shall never forget. Then he turned to Marini. What he said I cannot repeat, but the man slunk away, wincing under the scathing lash of the captain's words.

By this time the dog had been secured by the quartermaster. Captain Meadows went up to him and said something in a low tone.

The man nodded.

"All the same, a bite is a bite," cried Bruce, "and you may as well let me cauterise it, or send for Martin, the ship's doctor, to do it, if you prefer."

At that moment Martin himself was seen hurrying towards us.

"What's up?" he said. "You have been bitten, I hear, Boys. Let me look at the wound. I saw the dog; he looks queer enough, and——"

"Good God!" I muttered under my breath. I did not dare to say the awful

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thought which had flashed through my mind.

Boys sat down, pulled up his trouser, and allowed Martin and Bruce to examine the wound. It was not so deep as I had expected, and after it was cauterised Martin dressed it.

"You need not be at all anxious now," he said, looking at Boys; "we have cauterised the wound in time. Now Bruce and I will help you down to your cabin."

Boys stood up, and the two medical men gave him each an arm. But he had scarcely taken a couple of steps before, to our horror, he suddenly reeled and sank in a heap upon the deck.

"Good God, look here!" cried Bruce; "the man is poisoned." He bent over him and instantly grasped the situation, with all the keenness of his own special knowledge.

I stared at the fallen man in horror; his face was flushed, his eyes glassy and prominent; he was mumbling and muttering noisily to himself. Bruce gave one eager look into his eyes and then rushed to his cabin. He returned in a few moments.

"What, in Heaven's name, can it be?" I said to him.

"Something in the belladonna line. Get out the way; this is his only chance!"

He knelt down, pulled up the sleeve of Boys's jacket, and injected something into his arm.

"There, now, let us get him into his cabin," he said, turning to Martin. "It is a bit of luck, my having my antidote-case and some pilocarpine discs. But he is not out of the wood yet, by any means. This is a queer go."

We carried the poor fellow to his cabin and laid him on his bunk. The captain had followed us. Bruce turned to me.

"It's lucky you prevented Marini throwing the dog overboard," he said; "I want to see his mouth."

"He is chained up in the hatchway," said the captain; "but you don't suppose he is mad, do you?"

"It cannot be that, the effect was too instantaneous. I may be wrong, but I have a certain suspicion. I must see the dog immediately, I must look into his mouth."

"I will go with you. I suspected it, I own, only I thought it would be hydrophobia. This is a development I cannot understand."

The two doctors, the captain, and I now went aft. There we found the dog tied up. He was perfectly quiet and was lying down with his head between his front paws; when he saw Bruce he wagged his tail. Bruce bent down and patted him, and then, putting his hand quietly under his lower jaw, he raised the upper lip, and, opening his mouth, examined his teeth one by one.

"Ah! here we are," he cried. "So this is why Marini wanted to throw him overboard. What a devilish idea!"

"But what is it?" cried the captain, bending down and looking also into the brute's open jaw.

"Why, this," cried Bruce, pointing to the great canine fang; "see! *it is a false one.*" As he spoke he seized the tooth between his finger and thumb and with a little effort brought it out. With infinite skill the tooth had been kept in its place with a gold plate, and by a perfect piece of mechanism, on pressing the sharp end, which was hollow, a little receptacle was compressed behind it. This had evidently contained the poison which Bruce said most probably was hyoscyamine.

"An exact imitation of the rattlesnake's arrangement," he said. "Whatever can be the meaning of it all?"

The captain waited to hear no more.

"I'll have every one of those men in irons!" he cried, running quickly up the ladder. "Save Boys, for God's sake!"

We returned to the sick man's cabin, thunderstruck by our horrible discovery.

"See—he is opening his eyes—consciousness is returning!" said the ship's doctor.

Just at that moment the skipper appeared in the doorway of the cabin.

"Well," he said, "is there any chance? If he dies, Marini shall swing for it. I will expose the whole dastardly scheme the moment we get ashore."

"Hush!" said Martin. "Don't speak so loud. I believe that he is better.

* * * * *

The rest of the story is soon told. Marini and his crew had been already placed in irons. Dixon Boys recovered very slowly under the watchful care of Bruce and Martin, and by the time we reached England he was nearly himself again.

Yes, we were in time. The wedding had not yet taken place. The Syndicate was exposed, and the villain, Moss Rucher, thought it best to secure safety in flight.

Bruce and Violet Harley were engaged. I met Violet soon afterwards and she was good enough to say she owed her happiness to me. I think she was prejudiced in my favour, and told her so, but she stuck to her opinion.

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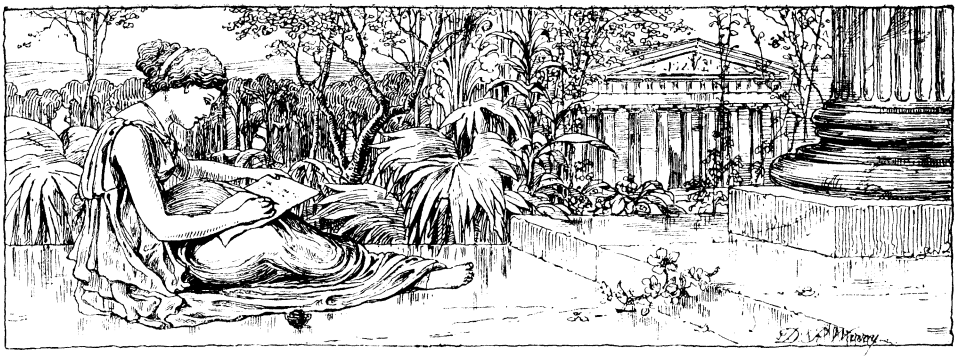

A CHAT WITH MRS. W. K. CLIFFORD.

By Mary Angela Dickens.

THERE are various woman writers of the present day whose books we hail with more or less pleasure, whom we admire and enjoy for one reason or another, according to our tastes and capacities. But perhaps there is no one among them who gives to all her readers alike the impression which Mrs. W. K. Clifford gives to us in her books. "Aunt Anne," "Mrs. Keith's Crime," "A Flash of Summer," "A Wild Proxy," these and all the other children of Mrs. Clifford's brain give us a delightful sense that we are in touch with an intensely sympathetic and womanly personality. And none of Mrs. Clifford's friends think of her or speak to her without a stirring within them of the same sense.

MRS. W. K. CLIFFORD.
Photo by Van der Weyde.

To go into Mrs. Clifford's study is to pass immediately into her atmosphere. It is a woman's room first of all: very pretty, very comfortable, very full of nice things—more like a drawing-room, indeed, than a work-room—and as far removed from the traditional conceptions of the "literary lady's" abode as it is possible for a room to be. Here, morning after morning, and evening after evening, Mrs. Clifford is to be found at work; but work with her implies by no means solely the act of production. She reads, she studies, she thinks. She has great faith in regular hours for work, but she has no faith whatever in the creative work which is done to order, or because the hour for work has struck. When she is not inclined for creative work she simply fills up her time in other ways. Neither has she any faith in the

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afternoon hours. "The afternoon is no good," she is wont to say, "except for novels, tea, and walking. The evening is the best time—don't you think so?—after the last post has come, when there are no more knocks or interruptions."

It is very probable that Mrs. Clifford would spend half the night in writing, at those times when the men and women of her imagination throng close upon her, but for a certain little difficulty, with which any woman who reads these words will feel a thrill of sympathy. Mrs. Clifford's study is at the bottom of the house, her bedroom at the top. She writes at night until the moment arrives when she begins to hear burglars creeping about, and is afraid to go upstairs! As the burglars usually put in an appearance about three-quarters of an hour after the rest of the house has gone to bed, it will be easily understood that night-work is not of much use to her. Not many men, perhaps, would fully appreciate the difficulty of the position, but Mrs. Clifford tells a little story in connection with it which proves that it is not all feminine. She was speaking one day to Huxley of her inability to sit up late.

"It is foolish," she said; "but I always hear burglars moving about."

"So do I," answered Huxley. "When I am working at night I not only hear burglars moving about, but I actually see them looking through the crack of the door at me!"

There is nothing more fascinating—given a clever man or woman—than the attempt to trace the germs of the personality of to-day in the little child of the past. And there is nothing in which, as a rule, one gets so little assistance from the subject himself. Mrs. Clifford is a case in point. One longs to know what she was as a little girl; and that little girl is just the one point on which it is impossible to excite her interest. She was not what may be described as a "literary child," though she read everything that came in her way, especially the old novelists and poets. She began to write pretty soon, too, for she wrote several stories in her early girlhood, and they appeared chiefly in the publications of Messrs. Cassell.

Mrs. Clifford has immense faith in desultory reading as an educator. "Reading in a groove is no good," she says. "Let people read everything—so long, of course, as it is not indecent or immoral."

Mrs. Clifford speaks from her own experience. Having prepared herself, all unconsciously, by those youthful years of desultory reading, when the time came which compelled her to step out into the market-place of life and become a bread-winner, she turned instinctively to literature. Everyone knows something of the mental powers which she brought with her to the struggle, but very few except her personal friends realise what else went to make up her equipment—the intense reverence for the work she was undertaking, and the deep-rooted sense that she was the bearer of an honoured name which was neither to be traded on nor belittled. These things served her as the armour too surely needed by every artist whose art must buy his bread. The temptation to scamp her work in order that more might be accomplished in a given time; the temptation to advertise herself and her wares, as is nowadays too much the fashion, passed Mrs. Clifford by. For her they had absolutely no existence. So keen and so delicate was her feeling with reference to her husband's name that, with the exception of "Anyhow Stories for Children"—in which much of her husband's teaching may be recognised—she published all her earlier books anonymously rather than run the faintest chance of being thought to make capital out of Professor W. K. Clifford's reputation. The authorship of "Mrs. Keith's Crime"—probably Mrs. Clifford's first great success—was only discovered by an accident, and on internal evidence. Somebody said, "Oh, 'Mrs. Keith's Crime' must be Mrs. Clifford's. She knows all about Spain." And the next thing was a paragraph, saying, "It is said that 'Mrs. Keith's Crime' is by," etc. And then another paragraph, without the qualifying preliminary. And so it went on.

Even "Aunt Anne" was published anonymously in *Temple Bar*. But the secret leaked out before it appeared in volume form, and the book had the author's name upon the title-page.

"It was a great surprise to me, the success of 'Aunt Anne,'" says Mrs. Clifford. "Of course 'Aunt Anne' was very real to me, but I never expected that other people would find her so."

And this brings us back to that which is, to Mrs. Clifford, infinitely more interesting than herself—her work. As has been said, she is no believer in anything but spontaneous work. She never writes a story because she is asked to do so, nor, on the other hand, does she ever write at random and without a commission. Her ideas dawn in her mind and lie there ripening, almost without consciousness on her part, until the moment comes when they are wanted. Very often it

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is a face that suggests a whole story to her—a face seen in the street, in a theatre, at a party. It strikes the mysterious chords of the imagination and the chords vibrate.

"One can't invent a story," is her theory. "It grows and unfolds itself. One can't write because one is asked to write, but only because one must."

Mrs. Clifford makes no elaborate plan of her stories, no sketches of characters. She just writes on and on, when her idea possesses her—"more illegibly than anyone else in the world," according to her own dictum—with no sense of criticism of her own work, driven by the impulse of the moment.

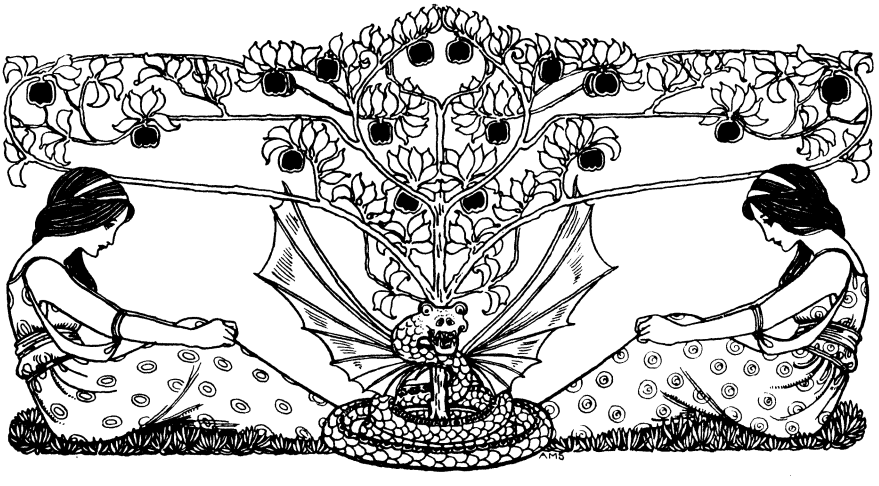
"One can't criticise them while one is writing," she says of her characters. "One is living their lives, goes up and down in their houses, reads their letters, and does all sorts of funny things. But when it is gone to the printer—ah! then one is overwhelmed with misery and degradation!"

Mrs. Clifford has her favourite child among her books, and that favourite, oddly enough, is not her most distinguished success, "Aunt Anne." It is to "A Wild Proxy" that her most affectionate thoughts are given.

Few parents can explain the why and wherefore of their partiality, but possibly something of Mrs. Clifford's leaning towards this, out of all her stories, may be due to the fact that the people in it fly about the Continent all the time! For, apart from her work, Mrs. Clifford's greatest enthusiasm is for travelling. It is a veritable passion with her.

"If I am seeing a friend off at the station," she will tell you, "I always have a longing to put myself in front of any great truck full of luggage and stalk along with a martial air as if it belonged to me, and I were going off on my travels. I love the change, and the people, and the scenery—above all, the mountains! There is nothing like them in the world!"

It is hardly necessary to say of Mrs. Clifford—the woman who has given us some of the most subtle and delicate pictures of womanhood—that all the questions connected with woman's work and interests are of the deepest interest to her. In the question of woman's work she finds—as who does not?—the gravest problems. Women, she thinks, are so anxious to succeed where men have succeeded that they miss many opportunities of doing well in directions where they would have the field to themselves and be enormously useful. There is no honour or credit in doing men's work less well than they themselves can do it. Of course, if a woman has genius, or even real talent in any direction, that is another matter. "To strive to do what one can do best as best it can be done," was her husband's teaching, and Mrs. Clifford entirely agrees with it. But what that work is should be left, she feels, for a woman's capacity to decide, not her ambition, though when the decision is thus made, ambition may have enormous influence in the right direction. Happily, Mrs. Clifford says, the feeling that work of any sort is a degradation, provided it is necessary or advisable to do it, has vanished or is vanishing, and that is one great step in the right direction.



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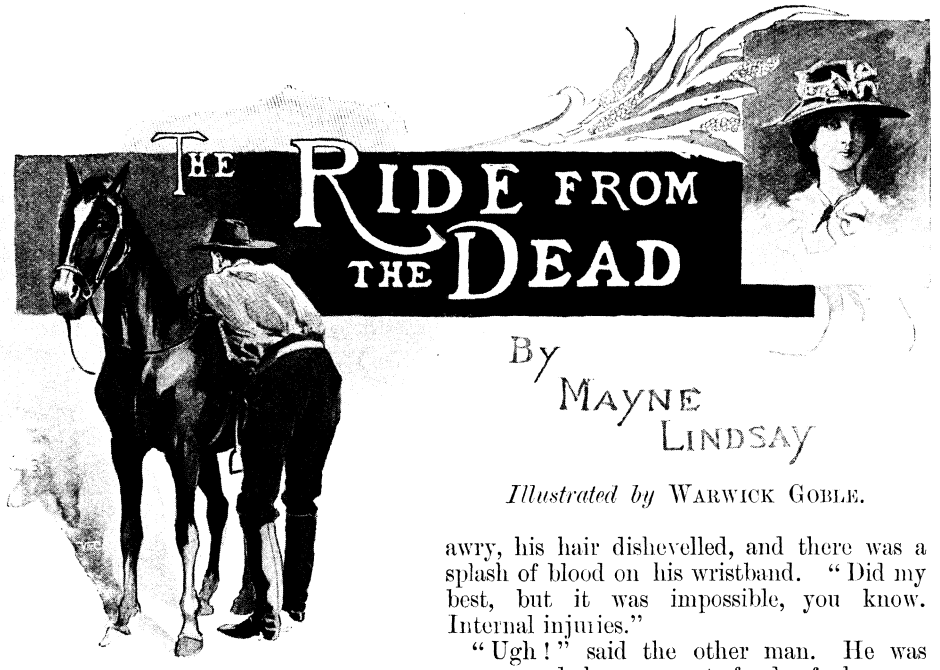

THE RIDE FROM THE DEAD

By MAYNE LINDSAY

Illustrated by WARWICK GOBLE.

A MAN came out into the verandah of the Stoney Rise house and looked across its shadows to the open plain. The sun was creeping above the horizon behind the house and the plantations, and the news of its uprising was written in streaks of rose colour and faint green flushes upon the western sky towards which he faced. The air was fresh; a little breeze that had risen betimes was dancing across the garden below, where the roses nodded at its passing and the clumps of pampas grass flickered and shivered. A magpie gurgled from the spruce fir on the grass, and from the nearest paddock that sloped up to the garden from the edge of a winding creek came the soft shuffle-shuffle of the feeding sheep. By contrast with the motion of the dawn, the wakefulness of the creatures, the colour of the Australian sky, the hurrying of hoofs in the horse paddock beyond the creek, where the white mists were rolling slowly away, the house behind was dark, silent and forbidding, staring out at the life around it with the unseeing gaze of a blind thing.

A horse was tethered to a verandah post, and the man walked towards it. As his feet sounded on the wooden floor another man, who had been sitting on the steps before the entrance, stood up and faced him.

"Well, doctor?" he said.

"He has gone," said the doctor wearily. He had the grey look of one who had watched through the night, his clothes were awry, his hair dishevelled, and there was a splash of blood on his wristband. "Did my best, but it was impossible, you know. Internal injuries."

"Ugh!" said the other man. He was young and he was not fond of horrors. Moreover, the sight of a disfigured, dirt-smeared face and body, with dull red patches that soaked through coat and waistcoat on to a white counterpane, was still fresh in his memory. Then, with the low tone in which men speak of sudden calamity—"It's an awful thing!"

"Aye, you may say so," said the doctor. He walked to the edge of the verandah and took a breath of the crisp air. Five miles away the dawn was touching a hill that stood out in the plain and marked one of the boundaries of Stoney Rise station. "I know plenty of men twenty years his junior who would have changed places with old Micky Blackwood yesterday evening. Plenty of men in Leura township who must have looked after him swinging home behind his pair of spanking creamies—the little white devils—and envied him his big house, his breed of merinoes, and his twenty thousand acres of fine grazing country. And then, a dead tree in the road—a rotten trace—smattering hoofs, and—that upstairs. Poor old Micky! . . . He never showed a sign of consciousness from the time I got here."

"He was a fine old man," said the other. "I can't realise it yet; the whole thing has been so horribly sudden. And how will *she* take it?"

"To be sure!" said the doctor. "I had forgotten for the moment. Poor girl! poor girl!"

"Somebody will have to break the news

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to her," continued the other speaker. "It would be too brutal to wire it; and yet she must know to-day if she is to be back here to-morrow. What a terrible ending it will be to her holiday! . . . . Will you do it, doctor?"

"Eh? what? me?" said the doctor, much taken aback. "My dear Chisholm, it's forty-five miles from here to the sea, and twenty of them across scrub and forest. My beat lies this side of Leura, not thirty miles beyond it, and I can't desert my patients, even for the sake of Ellice Blackwood. No."

"You were her father's old friend," said Chisholm. "You've known her ever since she was a baby."

"I tell you I can't do it," said the doctor testily. "Man alive! isn't there enough to arrange here, too, without a soul about but servants and hands, except you and me? You must go yourself. You've been the old man's manager for the last four years, in and out of his house all day long, and you must know his daughter quite well enough by this time. I advise you to start at once, for the sun is up, and if you get down to Irvine's Inlet by noon you will be lucky. Take the back road that skirts round Leura Hill, and that cuts below Wuurite straight to the forest. Break the news the best way you can, and bring the girl back with you. Poor child! No mother, no brothers and sisters, and now the old man gone. She will be heart-broken."

There flashed across Chisholm's mind the haunting image of a beautiful, proud face, and the clear accent of an imperious voice rang in his ears. He wondered how grief would strike at the queen of her little world; or whether sorrow could humble that free spirit; and he felt the stab of helpless sympathy.

"I'll go," he said, and turned to the horse without another word. He tightened the girths, strapped his coat across the saddle, and swung up into it. A God-speed from the doctor followed him, and he trotted down the drive to where a big white gate opened upon the Leura road. He cantered

"The sight was still fresh in his memory."

out to the bridge across the creek and then turned and looked back for a moment. His slight, wiry figure looked to advantage on horseback, and the grey sombrero that flapped back from his forehead disclosed an open, boyish, good-looking face, burnt to the bushman's tan by a southern sun.

The house looked very sombre and mournful in the daylight. Even an ignorant passer-by might have read signs of calamity in its face. Here a blind was drawn up askew, there another was pulled down; here a window was shut closely, and there one yawned wide. The hall door stood open, showing blackness within; and, above,

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the yellow light of a guttering candle flickered behind a curtain.

Something choked in Chisholm's throat as he turned away. Only yesterday the place had been alive with the loud step of the owner, with his hale, robust presence and his cheery voice—the voice of a prosperous man in the scene of his prosperity. Now the shadow of misfortune drooped low upon it, and, instead of the living figure, the walls hid a rigid, unheeding thing, lying stark and disfigured in that silent upper room. Chisholm had respected his employer and liked him; the thought that he was dead, and had passed thus suddenly out of ken, struck painfully to his heart.

He rode on towards Leura, setting his face to the south-west, where, forty odd miles away, came the coast-line that looked upon the Southern Ocean. There, perched on the sandhills above an inlet, was the bush hotel where Ellice Blackwood was spending her seaside holiday. And between him and her was the long, lonely ride; past Leura and along the ten miles beyond it to Peel township, and then on through the forest, by blazed track and corduroy road, to the sea.

The first four miles ran through the Stoney Rise paddocks; over a bank strewn with the wreckage of dead lightwoods; past sheep that scuffled away at the sound of the cantering hoofs; through gate after gate, and so on to the long, wire-fenced lane that cut through a neighbour's run. The wind hummed in his ears: it was a fresh, south breeze, and it seemed to him that it smelt of the sea.

He sat easily in his saddle and looked about him. The great plains stretched away on either side, broken only by a volcanic hill here and there and the indigo streak of the plantations. Presently the track dipped across a slope and through a couple of wooded paddocks, behind which was the glimpse of another homestead. He bore away to the right through the trees, jerked open a gate at the end of a long paddock, and rattled out on to the metalled road.

Still on and on. Leura township began to show out in white dots and flashing roofs at the side of the hill from which it drew its name. The sun rose higher and beat down hotly, and the ground at the roadside was as hard as flint. It was the end of summer, and the plains were baked out of all greenness: the paddocks were a grey-brown, shimmering to white where the grass grew thick over dried-up swamp or creek; and the only vivid hue was that of the distant blue gums, or the many gorgeous tints of the little parrots that screeched hard by. The dead man had driven along this road the day before, cracking a joke with that selector at the door of his cottage, probably, nodding to this wagoner crawling on behind his bullock-team, noticing everything with those keen old eyes of his, and thanking God, perhaps, for casting his lot in this great new country that he loved so well. And now——

The back road branched off a mile from the township. A paddock thick with dead trees, their branches strewn about it like the bones of a giant army, marched with it for a mile or two, and after that Wuurite house, with the trees all about it, looked out from a hill-top. He left it high above him on his left and rode on.

How would Ellice Blackwood take the news? Chisholm thought of his own awed feeling at the sight of the deathly face and helpless body, and thought of the additional keenness that the pain would have to the only child, the spoilt, wilful girl in the first flush of womanhood. She had made him smart many a time with her careless indifference to him; she had seemed so impervious to outside touch, so supreme in her little world. How would she take the cruel blow that Fate had dealt her? Once, he remembered, one of the station hands had been drowned when the creek was in flood—a man she knew and liked. He had told her; and he remembered how she had blanched and how her lips had quivered as she left him without a word. She had never mentioned the man's name again, the sudden death had made of it a thing not to be spoken lightly: how would her father's death come upon her? His heart throbbed for the girl.

A dip of the road, and Peel township straggled into view. Already the scrub cropped up, and he had passed through isolated bits of forest land. The way had grown rougher, too, the roads more hilly, the surrounding country more thickly wooded and more uncivilised. He stopped at the inn and took half an hour's breathing space. Townsmen in shirt-sleeves and wideawakes buzzed out from their work as the news that Chisholm bore spread. Even here, twenty-six miles from his station, Michael Blackwood was known and honoured.

And now the last stage of the ride lay before him. Chisholm rode slowly out of the township and down the sandy road, here shaded with banks and trees as it dipped

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into a gully, there staring into the eye of the sun across the scrub. Another two miles and the forest began to close upon him. Fallen timber lay across the track, the undergrowth was dense; and, above, the gums pointed their far-off tops to a steely sky.

What a fascination there was about the girl that he was going to meet to-day! While she was on the station he had had little enough of her, and had been glad to gather up the crumbs of her company. Yet his heart had sunk when she drove off for this holiday, and there had been a lack of interest in everything when she had gone. Before, the chance of meeting her riding far out on the run had been something to hope for during the long days in the open, and he had scrambled through his supper, evening after evening, to get the chance of finding her lounging on the house verandah when he stepped on to it in the dusk. He remembered one Sunday morning when she had walked out to a far plantation with him; and how kindly and how near she had seemed to him that day. She was often gracious to him when they were alone together. It was when other people were present that she sparred with him, chaffed him delicately, or sent the blood rushing to his face by some quick sarcasm. But when her mood was friendly, was there anything to compare with the eyes' steadfast look, or the sunshine that was her presence?

"Now he was in the heart of the forest."

And now he was in the heart of the forest. The sun streaked through the gum leaves upon the path, and sometimes his horse's hoofs thumped over corduroy road in place of the soft, sandy wheel-tracks. Once he passed a space where trees had crashed down one upon the other in a bush fire: there was a smell of burning, and he saw that some of the blackened trunks were still smouldering. Here and there a clearing held a selector's hut or saw-mill, and in one part a railway line cleft the forest at right angles with his path, and went on,

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straight as an arrow, till it narrowed out of sight.

What a dull fellow he must seem to the girl! She sharpened her wits upon him with such clever bits of ridicule, and all he ever found to oppose to her was a red face and a hasty retreat, full of an anger that melted away the next time that she spoke softly to him. Not that she ever showed remorse; but her moods had a way of changing as suddenly and unexpectedly as a chameleon's colour, and though the scoffing one prevailed as a rule, she had fifty others with which to bewilder him.

She was a wonderfully graceful, active creature, a true daughter of the bush. He had first seen her in the chrysalis stage; and even then she had not been awkward, but as full of mischievous life as a young colt. For a long time they had been friends, but now, for the last year, their relation had been more uneven; and if capable of rare and beautiful intimacy, the friendship had disappeared altogether sometimes in an estrangement and active hostility that stung him more than he could say.

A wallaby skipped across the road, and the forest crowded down into a dark gully where only the blazed trees showed the road. High above, over the distant tree tops, the sun was still climbing towards the meridian; eleven o'clock he made the time to be. The forest seemed drowsy, full of the midday hush in which Nature dozes. But still its influence touched him, and Pan's invisible pipes made melody through the whispering of the trees.

If he could only break through his restraint—question her as to the meaning of the many things that puzzled him! How would she answer? he wondered. Laugh, most probably, and turn his weapons upon him with some scornful flippancy that would leave him more sorely at a loss than ever. And, after all, why should it matter to him? . . . . Ah! Why?

Chisholm reeled in his saddle like a man who had been shot. There flashed upon him—perhaps it was the murmurings of the forest that had told it—why this girl's caprice meant so much to him. Blind! He had been more than blind. It was love that gnawed at his heart, love that drove home her flying words and pierced him with a bow drawn at a venture, love that saw in her queen and tyrant, friend and tormentor. It was love that made the station blank in her absence; that set his pulses dancing at her name; and that made a hidden joy stir now within him. And how purely, how earnestly, and with what impulse of fear, reverence, and longing he loved her!

He spurred his horse on more quickly and threw the forest behind him at last. A low belt of scrub flitted by, another clearing with a schoolhouse in it, a mile or two of scattered woodland, and then he drew rein at a line of sandhills. The sun was blazing down upon his head, but a cool wind blew steadily over the sand, and he looked upon the flashing, sparkling sea.

. . . So it was to this that the past four months had led him! He had always been the faithful servant, but now he knew himself for something more. All that there was of him was hers—his loyalty to defend her, his worship to honour her, his manhood to cherish the thought of her and keep it holy. A hopeless love it might be, for she was as far above him as the sun above the sea; but for the present it was sufficient to know that he loved her, and that within one little hour he would see her and touch her hand again.

And it was then, as the sandhills dipped, and Irvine's Inlet wound into sight, with the wooden "hotel" high on its further bank, and the coast beyond it, that Chisholm remembered on what sad errand he was bound. The Pan-song of the forest had sung only of love, and there was room for nothing more while he listened to its sweet pipings. Now it came upon him that his message was of Death. For the time it had been forgotten, as the dead will be forgotten by the living; and the memory of the gloomy house he had left at dawn, mourning for the silent master, had been banished by a lighter thought. It came back now and his conscience pricked him. Could the solemn meaning of that dead face be so quickly banished? And yet—was not Love stronger than Death? and must not the one thought conquer the other, so long as men had living hearts and women were made to love? Now, when the two mysteries intertwined, he thought it was well he knew his heart. Who could break the news better to the girl, and help her more tenderly through her sorrow, than the man who loved her—loved her—loved her?

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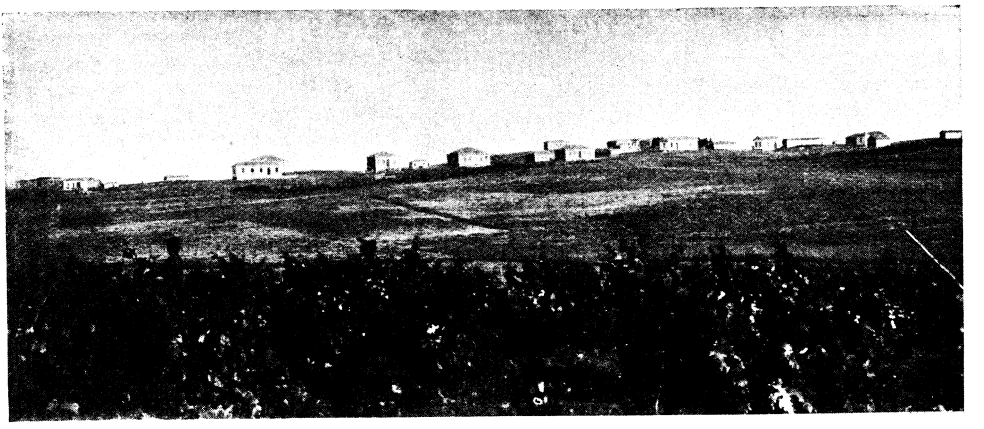

THE COLONY OF EKRON.

THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT.

By S. R. Lewison.

Illustrated with Portraits and Views of the Modern Jewish Colonies in Palestine.

"ALL who look upon Judaism as a permanent religious system which works necessarily through the agency of a peculiar race cannot be held to be merely dreaming if they hope for a national centre in Palestine as at least a distant probability." Whoever has glanced over the pages of Jewish newspapers or the general reviews during the past two years may be presumed to have read these words referring to Zionism. They seem at first sight to be the views of an outsider bringing three distinct conceptions into one sentence. In reality they were written by the Hon. and Rev. W. H. Fremantle in an article contributed by him, on "The Future of Judaism," to the July number of the *Contemporary Review* in the year 1878. Dr. Herzl was, therefore, quite correct when in 1896 he prefaced his world-stirring pamphlet, "The Jewish State," with the observation that, when he wished to suggest the re-establishment of the Jewish nation, he suggested no new thing. History is to the Jew very much the same as Macaulay said it was to the English, a record full of events that offer precedents for the present-day actions.

DR. THEODOR HERZL, PRESIDENT OF THE ZIONIST CONGRESS.

Zionism is a new name for a very old idea. By poetic license the rabbis declared that the Messiah was born on the very day that Jerusalem was destroyed. To turn the metaphor into sober fact, at the moment the Jewish nation was crushed seemingly beyond resurrection, the people of Israel were buoyed up by a hope of restoration, and that hope has been a perennial fountain of pure water, drinking at which the Jews have been able to survive each of the almost crushing blows by which they have been assailed during the passage of the nineteen centuries that have elapsed since

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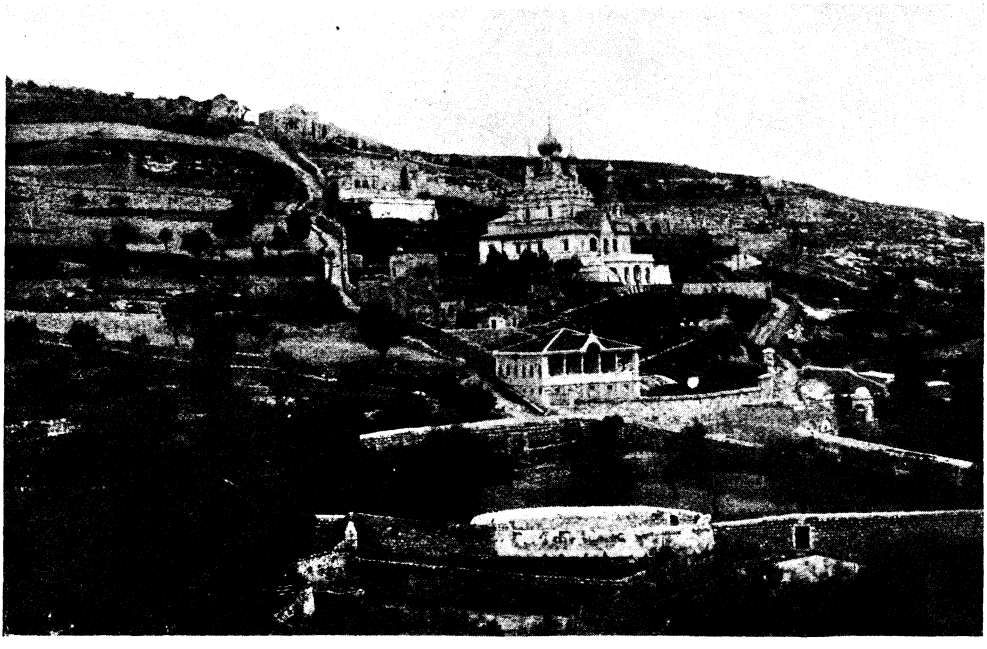
the Diaspora. Replacing the Temple sacrifices by symbols, ritual, and prayer, the Jew has year by year uttered these momentous words, "A year to come in Jerusalem." The more sanguine read it "Next year," and when next year brought them no nearer the realisation of the end, they may have put it off till to-morrow, ever to-morrow, but the same ideal remained, and not always as a mere vitalising dream. Bar Cochba, "the son of the Star," first and greatest of the "pseudo-Messiahs," was also one of the last to endeavour to realise his people's idea by force of arms, and no speculation in the range of the might-have-beens is more interesting than to ponder over this thought—What would have been the current of the world's progress if the Romans had been conquered on the fields of Bethar at the very time when they were mastering Britain? True, the Jews were defeated; but the Jew, in spite of defeat, continued to hope, and his history is full of the records of men who, like "David Alroy," the hero of one of Disraeli's romances, and "Sabbattai Zevi," the seventeenth century hero of Zangwill's "Turkish Messiah," rose on behalf of the race. The Cabbalists, Jewish mystics, whose life and works have been strangely misunderstood, fixed some hundreds of dates on which the Messiah would appear, and there are still Jews who endeavour to decipher Daniel's mystic numerals, and put the beginning of the New Reign at a date not more than twenty years ahead. Masses of the Jews have been stirred over and over again by rumours of the appearance of the Son of David or the discovery of the lost Ten Tribes—events which are to synchronise with the restoration, for the Messianic idea was not and is not an impalpable thing, but with tens of thousands the material restoration of Israel to the Land of Promise. While all legendary lore covers the Messenger with a halo of the supernatural, the rabbis seem in the main to have thought differently:



MODERN JERUSALEM: VIEW FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

the All Powerful would direct, but the event would not be heralded by signs, portents, and omens. Manasseh ben Israel, who negotiated with Cromwell for the readmission of the Jews into England, used this form of the Messianic idea—an excellent argument to a Puritan—urging that, when the dispersion of the House of Israel was complete, the gathering from the "four corners" would begin.

Apart from the mystic and Messianic elements, the staple idea of the return to Palestine runs like a bright thread through Jewish history, and at the end of the nineteenth century we face it still, but with a great alteration. The idea has received a

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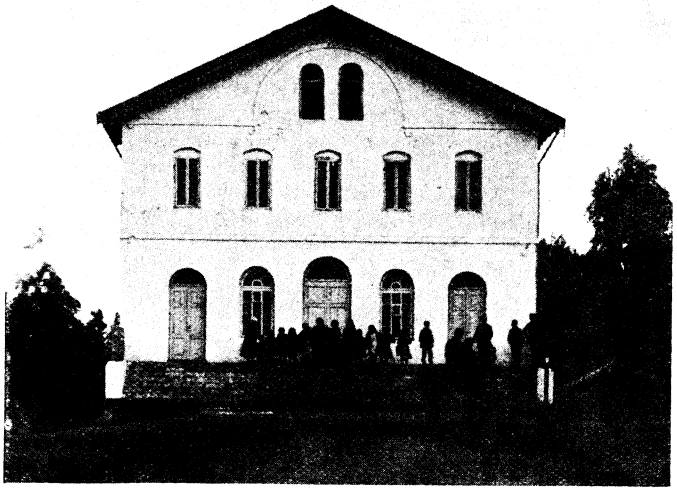
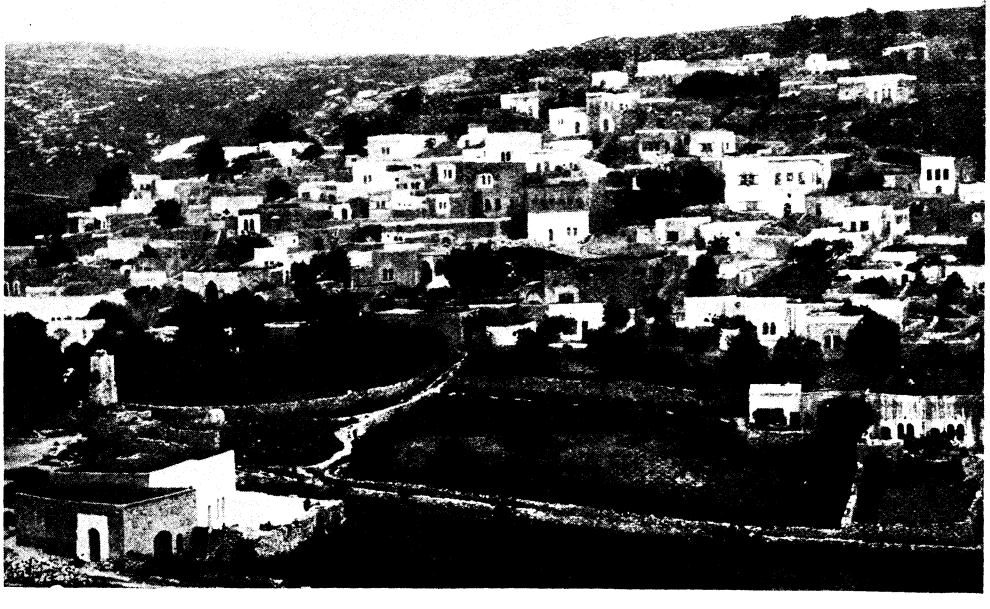
modern form, and persecution has revived the national consciousness of Israel. Anti-Semitism has brought the Jew back to his old idea. George Eliot's "Daniel Deronda" discussed the idea from the philosophic point of view. As far back as the beginning of the century Mordecai Noah, an American, formulated a plan for the founding of a Jewish state off the American coast. In the seventies, with the rise of anti-Semitism in Germany, Jewish writers began to protest against assimilation. They saw that the Liberal movement had unnerved the masses of the Jews, who were joining the ranks of the irreligious or becoming converts to another faith; and they noted, too, that all who yielded to the new environment suffered the shock and in part caused the attack. Years later, in 1880–82, the terrible persecutions in Russia, where the bulk of the Jews live, were met by an appeal from Russo-Jewish publicists, authors, poets, and novelists to found a Jewish state. A literature which had charmed an idle hour suddenly became endowed with life and meaning—the idle singers of an empty day found their pens inspired. With one accord the literati of Jewry said: "We must be emancipated; and as that cannot happen here, and we must quit and re-establish ourselves, where but



THE SCHOOL-HOUSE, RISCHON-LE-ZION.



SAFED, ONCE THE CENTRE OF THE SCHOOLS OF JEWISH THEOLOGICAL RESEARCH.

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in Palestine, the Holy Land, the ancient fatherland to which the pious made and yet make pilgrimages, where the old travel to end their weary days, whence the earth is yet taken to place on the eyes of those who die in the many lands of exile? The Russian Jews had everything but means and organisation, and that is not surprising. The world's history shows us that the higher the ideal, the more impotent the idealist.

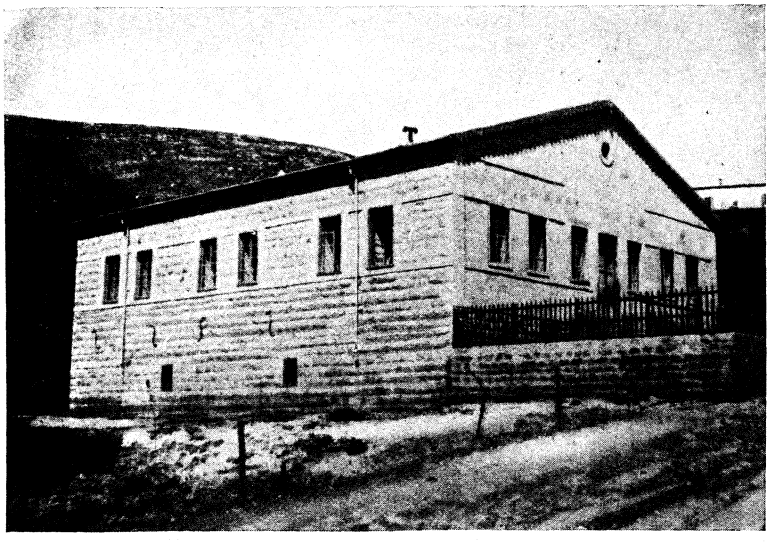
Persecution had the same reviving effect upon the Jews of Roumania, but there the ideas of Laurence Oliphant prevailed, and Dr. Moses Gaster, the learned spiritual chief of the Sephardic congregations of England, helped in the then perilous work of starting the first Jewish agricultural colony in Palestine. The Russian Jews eagerly seized upon the idea, and Baron Edmond de Rothschild, of Paris, became the patron of the movement, pouring untold thousands into the schemes which should turn an urban people to the rural occupation their forefathers followed, and change townsmen into agriculturists. In the years that have elapsed since the work began many colonies have been started; some few have died off, but to-day thirty-three survive, all more or less flourishing.

Jaffa has its colonists' market, and to the Jew himself has it been given to restore to fertility the soil that was barren from the days of his ancestors. Nothing in the world's history is more remarkable than this return of an agricultural people to husbandry, or the love of a people for the land they but dimly remembered, but to which they ever turn to pray. The colonisation progressed from the commencement, and when at the end of the first six years the strict ritualists desired to reinstitute the Sabbatical year, and allow the newly reclaimed lands to lie fallow, the late Rabbi Mohilewer, of Bialystok, a foremost leader in the movement, had the courage to refuse to allow them to endanger the position of the colonists for the sake of a Biblical law that had fallen into desuetude. This fact illustrates how near the Jew of the present day is to his forefather of the long past.

DR. MAX NORDAU.
From a sketch at the Zionist Congress.

The agitation begun in Russia began to spread westward and caught on here and there. "Lovers of Zion" societies to colonise Palestine were founded in Austria, Roumania, Germany, France, England, and America. In 1893, thanks to the exertions of Dr. Haffkine, the eminent bacteriologist, a central committee was established in Paris, aided largely by Baron Edmond de Rothschild's purse.

Like a bolt from the blue a pamphlet arrived in April, 1896. It was on the subject of the Jewish State, by Dr. Theodor Herzl, journalist, lawyer, and playwright. In Austria anti-



A SCHOOL-HOUSE IN ONE OF THE COLONIES.

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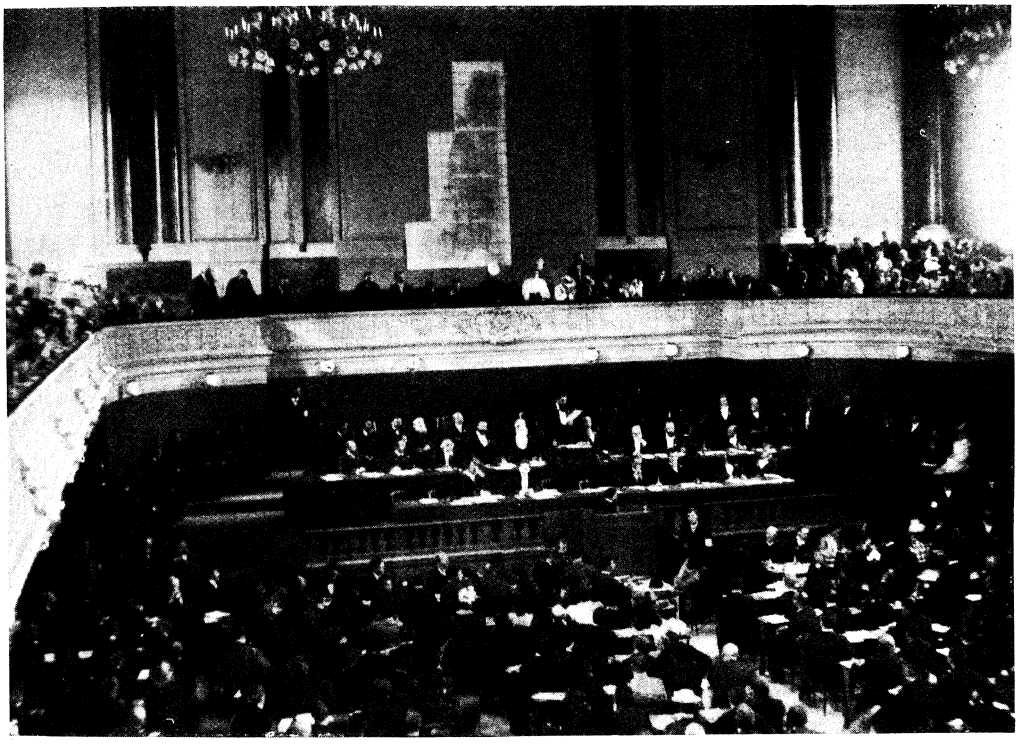
Semitism was rampant, Vienna was suffering, as it still is suffering, from a plague of race hatred. "Let those of us who will not or cannot assimilate with the nations build a modern state in Palestine." Such was the broad principle of the new scheme, and the author had worked his plans in full detail. A chartered company was to be formed, the work was to be carried out on a commercial, not on a philanthropic basis. The old idea in a new phrase and phase set Jewry aflame. Dr. Herzl passed from Constantinople to London in July, 1896; from a material salvation: he must efface himself or endeavour to emancipate himself out of Europe. The students of Vienna, the literary classes, were fired, the poor and the lettered formed bands, the middle class and the rich held aloof. No stranger page in modern history will be written than the one which shall describe how a handful of men, obedient to a common impulse, united their pens at three corners of the globe and kept this movement, planted on fertile soil, alive and flourishing. At the beginning of 1897 Dr. Herzl hazarded a bold stroke and summoned



THE BASLE CONFERENCE.

Rabbis seated; Dr. Herzl speaking, supported on the left by Mr. Bentinck, Prof. Gotthiel, Dr. Ruf, Dr. Gaster, and Dr. Nordau; on the right by Prof. Mandelstamm, Dr. Leppe, and Herr Wolfssohn.

journalist he became a national hero. The richer Jews in England and on the Continent played with the idea for a moment and then dropped it; a year later a number of rabbis paraphrased the Jewish prayer book, the Bible, the Rabbinic writings, but the new movement began well at the bottom of the human ladder, amongst those whom it is destined to benefit. Among the first to fall in under the banner was Dr. Max Nordau, physician, philosopher, and writer. It was true, he said, and an irony of history, there were and are two paths for the Jew to a congress of Zionists. Owing to opposition the place of gathering had to be shifted from Munich to Basle, and there, in August, 1897, for the first time in nearly two thousand years the House of Israel was reunited. Delegates came from villages and continents, northern and southern, eastern and western Jews jostled together, and for three days met in solemn conclave and discussed the situation. In his "Dreamers of the Ghetto" Zangwill has a vivid account of the scene. The outcome was an organisation and a programme. The congress amazed even

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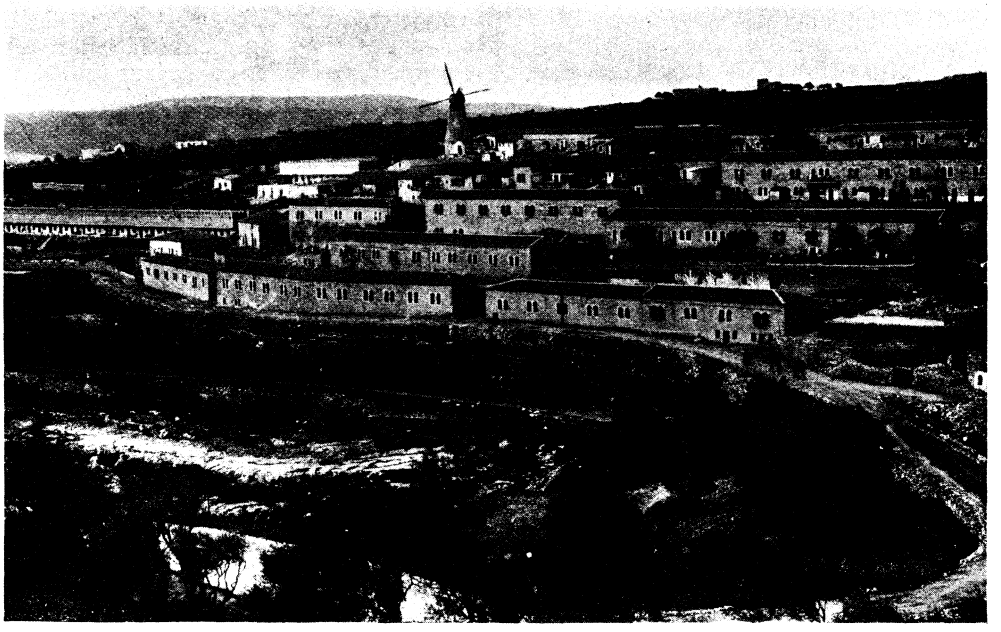

A FLOURISHING COLONY

those who summoned it: the intensity of the enthusiasm was tremendous, and, remarkable to relate, it has been maintained during the past year. There were two hundred delegates at the first congress, four hundred were present at the second—held at the end of August, 1898—and the movement is to effect its great *coup* by floating a bank, which is to be its financial instrument. The announcement made in May that a Jewish colonial bank was contemplated has been followed up by tens of thousands of applications for shares, and the majority of the would-be shareholders are poor Jews, many of them living in towns and villages whose names are unknown even to their well-informed leaders. From Bessarabia to South America and Johannesburg the masses of Jewry have risen in obedience to an old idea, and show that they are prepared to venture something in order to realise it.

And what does this movement—semi-religious, semi-national—mean?

To the Jews, the re-establishment of the Jewish state would mean the making of a refuge free from all chances of persecution. To Turkey the Jews would act as a strengthening element. Indeed, it would be a peaceful solution of the Eastern Question. With the Jews in possession there would be an end to the struggle between the great nations for the ownership of Palestine. The Turk, influenced by the industry and enterprise of the Jews, might cease to be the Sick Man; and the average newspaper reader knows without prompting what Turkey sick has meant to the world since Napoleon met Alexander I. at Tilsit. Zionism implies to the Jew a legally secured and publicly assured safeguarded home to the world, it spells peace to the sorely tried son of Israel. Some have even ventured to dream of a re-established Israel acting as the national arbitrator of the world's quarrels—the Millenium in practice. But something less than this would mean much to the world at large. Given such an impulse as the re-establishment of the nation, the sweet singers of Israel would awake, and their thoughts, already ennobled by suffering, might essay the highest flights, whilst signs are not wanting that the trend of the movement would be towards the creation of new forms of art in keeping with the new ideals. If the poet learns in suffering to teach in song, surely the Jews must have very many poets. Finally, here is a summary of the whole matter, in the words of the writer quoted at the beginning of this article. "Palestine has hitherto been to England and to Europe a land of merely sentimental interest, such as Egypt was before Napoleon cast his eyes upon it. But Egypt means something very different from this now. What if the intercourse of Europe with India and China should be multiplied ten times,

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and that with Australia still more? What if Palestine should be enlarged into Syria? and if the Euphrates Valley become the chief line of transit between Europe and the East? Who can say that the families of English Jews, who two centuries ago were Spanish or German, may not two centuries, or less than one century, hence find Palestine as advantageous, socially, and politically, as it is now the contrary? Who can say that in the natural or providential course of events they may not be foremost in carrying the good things of the West to the East as they were formerly in bringing the good things of the East to the West?"

Since this article was written, late last year, the progress made by the movement has been remarkably rapid. Fresh from his triumph at Basle, Dr. Theodor Herzl visited London and addressed a mass meeting of the Jews at Charrington's Assembly Hall in the Mile End Road. Seven thousand of the poorest people hung upon his words and greeted them with enthusiasm; the wealthy section of the community held aloof. As I write there are two camps in English Jewry. The larger one is full of men whose possessions consist of little more than Faith and Hope, the smaller one holds the people who have succeeded in life. These last offer no solution to the Jewish problem. They see Eastern Europe piling persecution upon persecution, and they are very sorry, forgetting that such sorrow is only one of the many emotions they can well afford to gratify. "Zionism," they say, "is a Counsel of Despair; it is a very dangerous movement, calculated to rouse anti-Semitism." And on this account they are opposing the Zionists. The spectacle is one surprising as it is sad. Both Sultan and Kaiser have received Dr. Herzl and listened with approval to his scheme for a legally secured home for the Jews. Here for the moment the story ends. Will the hopes of the Jews be fulfilled, or will the great question of their destiny drag on indefinitely, accumulating misery and suffering all over the world, and threatening a crisis that one hardly dares to contemplate? It is too early to say; the Jews can but wait and hope. The signs of the times are with them.

COLONISTS AT WORK IN METULLAH.

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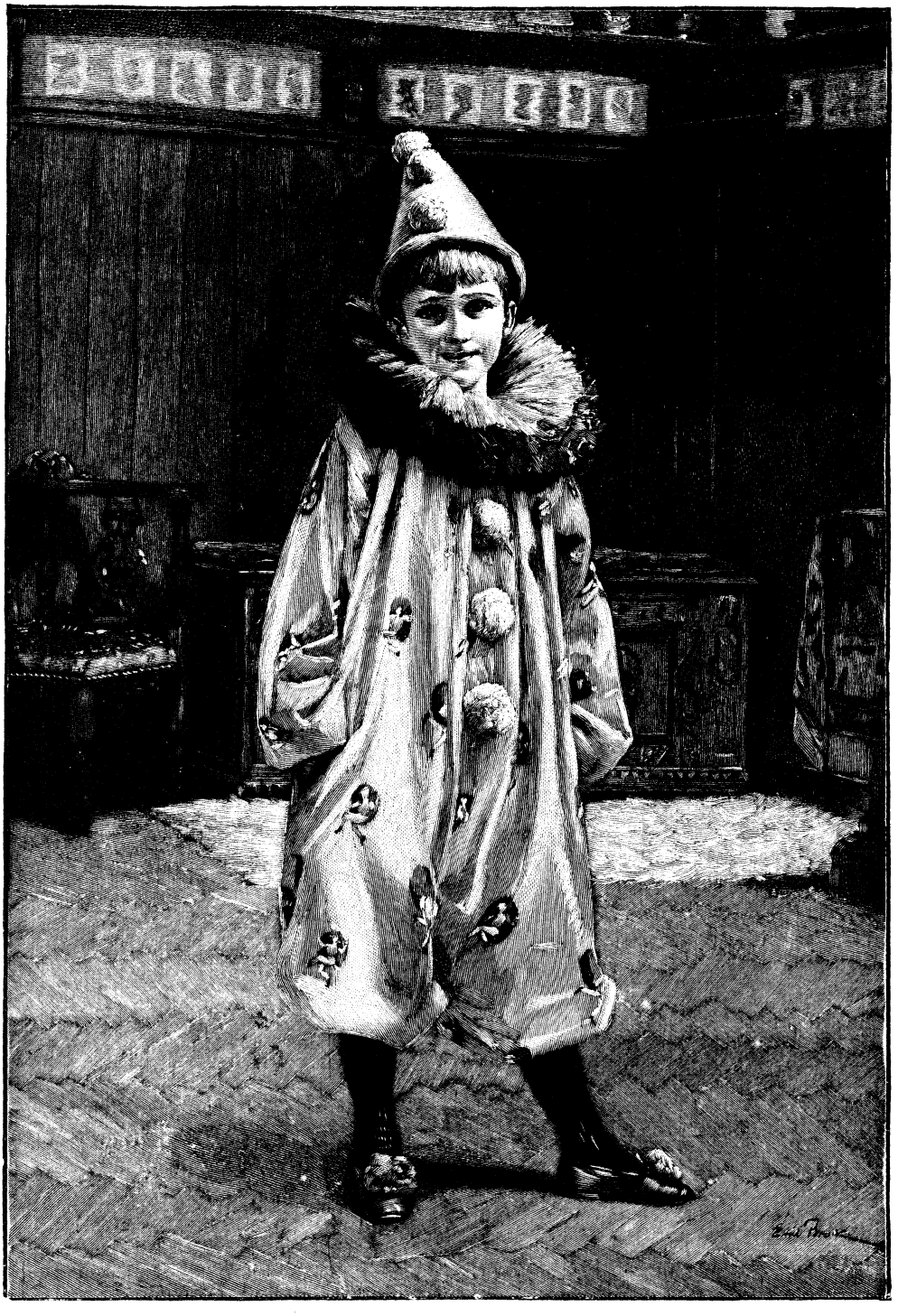

Pierrot.

From the Picture by E. Brock.

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JOAN OF THE SWORD.

By S. R. Crockett.*

Illustrated by Frank Richards.

SYNOPSIS OF FOREGOING CHAPTERS.

In the preceding chapters we are introduced to the Duchess Joan of Hohenstein, in Castle Kernsberg, who is twenty-one years old and is a keen and accomplished swordswoman. She is bound by the decree of her father, anxious to unite the two States, either to marry Prince Louis of Courtland or to forfeit her dominion. An ambassador arrives from a neighbouring State, and, on learning that he is visiting Courtland on leaving Kernsberg, Joan determines to accompany him disguised as his secretary, in order that she may see the Prince unknown to him. They arrive at Courtland during a grand tournament. "Johann Pyrmont," as the secretary is called, is much interested in one particular knight who wins the prize for bravery. Johann hears him spoken of as "the Prince," and is glad to have met him so soon. Next day the secretary makes the acquaintance of Princess Margaret of Courtland (sister to the Prince), who is greatly fascinated by the young man's looks and ingenuousness. She promptly discards her former cavalier, a Muscovite Prince, who is mad with jealousy. Johann, however, is much confused at the double *rôle* that is necessary in order to preserve the secret of his identity. On the Princess asking his name, he replies that he is the Count von Löen. She confesses her love for the secretary in a most frank manner, and then wonders that he is so coldly undemonstrative. The Muscovite Prince, challenging the secretary to a duel, is seriously wounded for his pains; the secretary is mobbed, and has to flee the country in all haste. He is assisted in his flight by an officer, Count von Lynar, who accompanied him in the ambassador's train. This young man is so like "Johann" in features that the two might be taken for brothers. The Princess mistakes him in the dark for the secretary, and astonishes him by embracing him at parting. On reaching Kernsberg, "Johann" once more becomes the Duchess Joan, and in no way regrets her escapade, since it has given her a glimpse of "the Prince," and she is happy in thinking of him as her future husband. Von Lynar's dreams are of the beautiful Princess who had shown him such an unusual and unaccountable mark of favour.

CHAPTER XII.

JOAN FORSWEARS THE SWORD.

It was not in accordance with etiquette that two such nobly-born betrothed persons, to be allied for reasons of high State policy, should visit each other openly before the day of marriage; but many letters and presents had come to Kernsberg, all bearing witness to the lover-like eagerness of the Prince of Courtland and of his desire to possess so fair a bride, especially one who was to bring him so coveted a possession as the hill provinces of Kernsberg and Hohenstein.

Amongst other things he had forwarded portraits of himself, drawn with such skill as the artists of the Baltic possessed, of a man in armour, with a countenance of such wooden severity that it might stand (as the Duchess openly declared) just as well for Werner, her chief captain, or any other man of war in full panoply.

"But," said Joan within herself, "what care I for armour black or armour white? Mine eyes have seen and my heart does not forget."

Then she smiled and for a while forgot the disappointment of the Princess Margaret, which troubled her much at other times.

The winter was unusually long and fierce in the mountains of Kernsberg, and even along the Baltic shores the ice packed thicker and the snow lay longer by a full month than usual.

It was the end of May, and the full bursting glory of a northern spring, when at last the bridal cavalcade wound down from the towers of the Castle of Kernsberg. Four hundred riders, every man arrayed like a prince in the colours of Hohenstein—four fair maids to be bridesmaids to their Duchess, and as many matrons of rank and years to bring their mistress with dignity and discretion to her new home. But the people and the rough soldiers openly mourned for Joan of the Sword Hand. "The Princess of Courtland will not be the same thing!" they said.

And they were right, for since the last time she rode out Joan had thought many things. Could it be that she was indeed that reckless maid who once had vowed that she would go and look once at the man her father

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had bidden her marry, and then, if she did not like him, would carry him off and clap him in a dungeon till he had paid a swinging ransom? But the knight of the white plume, and the interview she had had with a certain Prince in the summer palace of Courtland, had changed all that.

Now she would be sober, grave—a fit mate for such a man. Almost she blushed to recall her madcap feats of only a year ago.

As they approached the city, and each night brought them closer to the great day, Joan rode more by herself, or talked with the young Dane, Maurice von Lynar, of the Princess Margaret, without, however, telling him aught of the rose garden or the expositions of foreign customs which had preceded the duel with the Wasp.

The heart of the Duchess beat yet faster when at last the great day of their entry arrived. As they rode toward the gate of Courtland they were aware of a splendid cavalcade which came out to receive them in the name of the Prince, and to conduct them with honour to the palace prepared for them.

In the centre of a brilliant company rode the Princess Margaret, in a well-fitting robe of pale blue broidered with crimson, while behind and about her was such a galaxy of the fashion and beauty of a court, that had not Joan remembered and thought on the summer parlour and the man who was waiting for her in the city, she had almost bidden her four hundred riders wheel to the right about, and gallop straight back to Kernsberg and the heights of Hohenstein.

At sight of the Duchess's party the Princess alighted from off her steed with the help of a cavalier. At the same moment Joan of the Sword Hand leaped down of her own accord and came forward to meet her new sister.

The two women kissed, and then held each other at arm's length for the luxury of a long look.

The face of the Princess showed a trace of emotion. She appeared to be struggling with some recollection she was unable to locate with precision.

"I hope you will be very happy with my brother," she faltered; then after a moment she added, "Have you not perchance a brother of your own?"

But before Joan could reply a representative of the Prince had come forward to conduct the bride-elect to her rooms, and the Princess gave place to him.

But all the same she kept her eyes keenly about her, and presently they rested with a sudden brightness upon the young Dane, Maurice von Lynar, at the head of his troop of horse. He was near enough for her to see his face, and it was with a curious sense of strangeness that she saw his eyes fixed upon herself.

"He is different—he is changed," she said to herself; "but how—wait till we get to the palace, and I shall soon find out."

And immediately she caused it to be intimated that all the captains of troops and the superior officers of the escort of the Duchess Joan were to be entertained at the palace of the Princess Margaret.

So that at the moment when Joan was taking her first survey of her chambers, which occupied one entire wing of the great palace of the Princess of Courtland, Margaret the impetuous had already commanded the presence of the Count von Löen, one of the commanders of the bridal escort.

The young officer entrusted with the message returned almost immediately, to find his mistress impatiently pacing up and down.

"Well?" she said, halting at the upper end of the reception-room and looking at him.

"Your Highness," he said, "there is no Count von Löen among the officers of Kernsberg!"

Margaret of Courtland stamped her foot.

"I expected as much," she said. "He shall pay for this. Why, man, I saw him with my own eyes an hour ago—a young man, slender, sits erect in his saddle, of a dark allure, and with eyes like those of an eagle."

A flush came over the youth's face.

"Does he look like a brother of the Countess Joan?" he said.

"That is the man—Count von Löen or no. That is the man, I tell you. Bring him immediately to me."

The young officer smiled.

"Methinks he will come readily enough. He started forward as if to follow me when first I told my message. But when I mentioned the name of the Count von Löen he stood aside in manifest disappointment."

"At all events, bring him instantly!" commanded the Princess.

The officer bowed low and retired.

The Princess Margaret smiled to herself.

"It is some more of their precious State secrets," she said. "Well—I love secrets; but only my own, or those that are told to me. And I will make my gentleman pay for playing off his Counts von Löen on me!"

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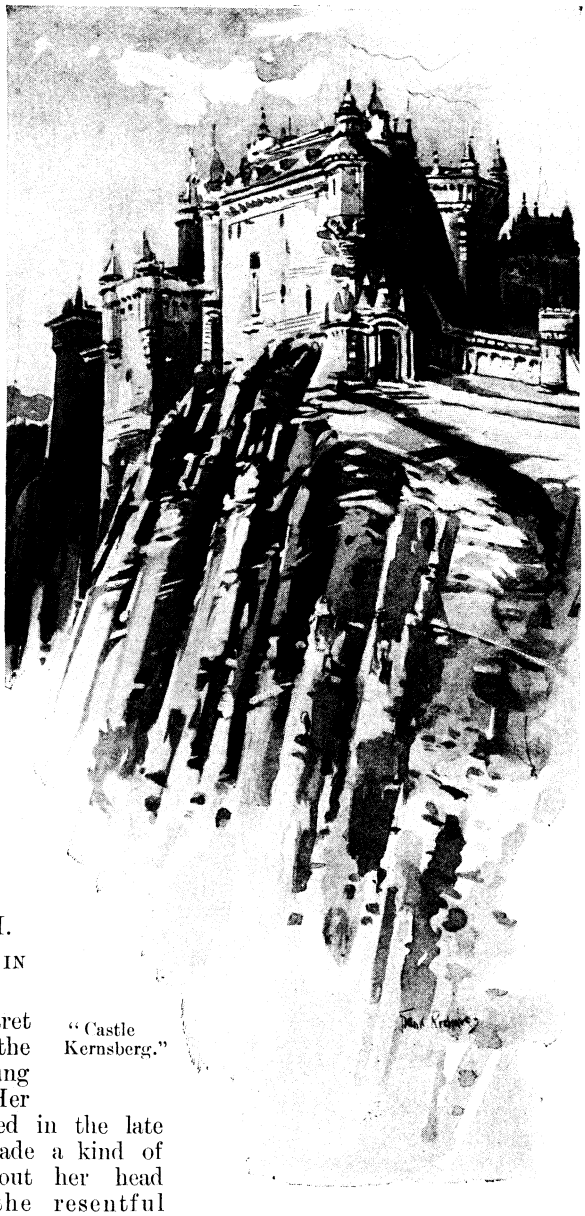
Presently she heard heavy footsteps approaching the door.

"Come in—come in straightway," she said in a loud, clear voice; "I have a word to speak with you, Sir Count—who yet deny that you are a count. And, prithee, how many silly girls have you taught the foreign fashions of linked arms, and all that most pleasant ceremony of leave-taking in Kernsberg and Plassenburg?"

Then the Sparhawk had his long-desired view in full daylight of the woman whose lips, touched once under cloud of night, had dominated his fancy and enslaved his will during all the weary months of winter.

Also he had before him, though he knew it not, a somewhat difficult and complicated explanation.



"Castle Kernsberg."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SPARHAWK IN THE TOILS.

THE Princess Margaret was standing by the window as the young man entered. Her golden curls flashed in the late sunshine, which made a kind of haze of light about her head as she turned the resentful brilliance of her eyes upon Maurice von Lynar.

"Is it a safe thing, think you, Sir Knight, to jest with a princess in her own land and then come back to flout her for it?"

Maurice understood her to refer to the kiss given and returned in the darkness of the night. He knew not of how many other indiscretions he was now to bear the brunt, or he had turned on the spot and fled once more across the river.

"My lady," he said, "if I offended you, it was not done intentionally, but by mistake."

"By mistake, sir! Have a care. I may have been indiscreet, but I am not imbecile."

"The darkness of the night——" faltered Von Lynar, "let that be my excuse."

"Pshaw," flashed the Princess, suddenly firing up; "do you not see, man, that you cannot lie yourself out of this? And, indeed, what need? If I were a secretary of embassy, and a princess distinguished me with her slightest favour, methinks when next I came again I would not meanly deny her acquaintance!"

Von Lynar was distressed, and fortunately for himself his distress showed in his face.

"Princess," he said, standing humbly before her, "I did wrong. But consider the sudden temptation, the darkness of the night——"

"The darkness of the night," she said, stamping her foot, and in an instinctively mocking tone; "you are indeed well inspired.

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You remind me of what I ventured that you should be free. The darkness of the night, indeed! I suppose that is all that sticks in your memory, because you gained something tangible by it. You have forgotten the walk through the corridors of the Palace, all you taught me in the rose garden, and —and how apt a pupil you said I was. Pray, good Master Forgetfulness, who hath forgotten all that, forgotten even his own name, tell me what you did in Courtland eight months ago?"

"The Princess Margaret was standing by the window."

"I came—I came," faltered the Sparhawk, fearful of yet further committing himself, "I came to find and save my dear mistress."

"Your—dear—mistress?" The Princess spoke slowly, and the blue eyes hardened till they overtopped and beat down the bold, black ones of Maurice von Lynar; "and you dare to tell me this—me, to whom you swore that you had never loved woman in the world before, never spoken to them word of wooing or compliment! Out of my sight, fellow! The Prince, my brother, will deal with you."

Then all suddenly her pride utterly gave way. The disappointment was too keen. She sank down on a silk-covered ottoman by the window side, sobbing.

"Oh, that I could kill you now, with my hands—so," she said in little furious jerks, gripping at the pillow; "I hate you, thus to put a shame upon me—me, Margaret of Courtland. Could it have been for such a thing as you that I sent away the Prince of Muscovy—yes, and many others—because I could not forget you? And now——!"

Now Maurice von Lynar was not quick in discernment where woman was concerned, but on this occasion he recognised that he was blindly playing the hand of another, a hand, moreover, of which he could not hope to see the cards. He did the only thing which could have saved him with the Princess. He came near and sank on one knee before her.

"Madam," he said humbly and in a moved voice, "I beseech you not to be angry—not to condemn me unheard. In the sense of being in love, I never loved any but yourself. I would rather die than put the least slight upon one so surpassingly fair, whose memory has never departed from me, sleeping or waking, whose image, dimly seen, has never for a moment been erased from my heart's tablets."

The Princess paused and lifted her eyes till they dwelt searchingly upon him. His obvious sincerity touched her willing heart.

"But you said just now that you came to Courtland to see 'your dear mistress?'"

The young man put his hand to his head.

"You must bear with me," he said, "if perchance for a little my words are wild. I had, indeed, no right to speak of you as my dear mistress."

"Oh, it was of me that you spoke," said the Princess, beginning to smile a little; "I begin to understand."

"Of what other could I speak?" said the shameless Von Lynar, who now began to feel his way a little clearer. "I have indeed been very ill, and when I am in straits my head is still unsettled. Oftentimes I forget my very name, so sharp a pang strikes through my forehead that I dote and stare and forget all else. It springs from a secret

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"'To what,' she said, 'am I so fortunate as to owe the unexpected honour of this visit?'"

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wound that at the time I knew nothing of."

"Yes—yes, I remember. In the duel with the Wasp in the yew tree walk it happened. Tell me, is it dangerous? Did it well-nigh cost you your life?"

The youth modestly hung down his head.

This sudden spate of falsehood had come upon him, as it were, from the outside.

"If the truth will not help me," he muttered, "why, I can lie with any man. Else wherefore was I born a Dane? But, by my faith, my mistress must have done some rare tall lying on her own account, and now I am reaping that which she hath sown."

As he kneeled thus the Princess bent over him with a quizzical expression on her face.

"You are sure that you speak the truth now? Your wound is not again causing you to dote?"

"Nay," said the Sparhawk; "indeed, 'tis almost healed."

"Where was the wound?" queried the Princess anxiously.

"There were two," answered Von Lynar diplomatically; "one in my shoulder at the base of my neck, and the other, more dangerous because internal, on the head itself."

"Let me see."

She came and stood above him as he put his hand to the collar of his doublet, and, unfastening a tie, he slipped it down a little and showed her at the spring of his neck Werner von Orseln's thrust.

"And the other," she said, covering it up with a little shudder, "that on the head, where is it?"

The youth blushed, but answered valiantly enough.

"It never was an open wound, and so is a little difficult to find. Here, where my hand is, above my brow."

"Hold up your head," said the Princess. "On which side was it? On the right? Strange, I cannot find it. You are too far beneath me. The light falls not aright. Ah, that is better!"

She kneeled down in front of him and examined each side of his head with interest, making as she did so many little exclamations of pity and remorse.

"I think it must be nearer the brow," she said at last; "hold up your head—look at me."

Von Lynar looked at the Princess. Their position was one as charming as it was dangerous. They were kneeling opposite to one another, their faces, drawn together by the interest of the surgical examination, had approached very close. The dark eyes squarely looked into the blue. With stuff inflammable, fire and tow in such conjunction, who knows what conflagration might have ensued had Von Lynar's eyes continued thus to dwell on those of the Princess?

But the young man's gaze passed over her shoulder. Behind Margaret of Courtland he saw a man standing at the door with his hand still on the latch. A dark frown overspread his face. The Princess, instantly conscious that the interest had gone out of the situation, followed the direction of Von Lynar's eyes. She rose to her feet as the young Dane also had done a moment before.

Maurice recognised the man who stood by the door as the same whom he had seen on the ground in the yew tree walk when he and Joan of the Sword Hand had faced the howling mob of the city. For the second time Prince Wasp had interfered with the amusements of the Princess Margaret.

The lady looked haughtily at the intruder.

"To what," she said, "am I so fortunate as to owe the unexpected honour of this visit?"

"I came to pay my respects to your Highness," said Prince Wasp, bowing low. "I did not know that the Princess was amusing herself. It is my ill-fortune, not my fault, that I interrupted at a point so full of interest."

It was the truth. The point was decidedly interesting, and therein lay the sting of the situation, as probably the Wasp knew.

"You are at liberty to leave me now," said the Princess, falling back on a certain haughty dignity which she kept behind her headlong impulsiveness.

"I obey, madam," he replied; "but first I have a message from the Prince your brother. He asks you to be good enough to accompany his bride to the minster to-morrow. He has been ill all day with his old trouble, and cannot wait in person upon his betrothed. He must abide in solitude for this day at least. Your Highness is apparently more fortunate!"

The purpose of the insult was plain; but the Princess Margaret restrained herself, not, however, hating the insulter less.

"I pray you, Prince Ivan," she said, "return to my brother and tell him that his commands are ever an honour, and shall be obeyed to the letter."

She bowed in dignified dismissal. Prince Wasp swept his plumed hat along the floor with the depth of his retiring salutation, and in the same moment he flashed out his sting.

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"I leave your Highness with less regret as I perceive that solitude has its compensations!" he said.

The pair were left alone, but all things seemed altered now. Margaret of Courtland was silent and distrait. Von Lynar had a frown upon his brow, and his eyes were very dark and angry.

"Next time I must kill the fellow!" he muttered. He took the hand of the Princess and respectfully kissed it.

"I am your servant," he said; "I will do your bidding in all things, in life or in death. If I have forgotten anything, in aught been remiss, believe me that it was fate and not I. I will never presume, never count on your friendship past your desire, never recall your ancient goodness. I am but a poor soldier, but at least I can faithfully keep my word."

The Princess withdrew her hand as if she had been somewhat fatigued.

"Do not be afraid," she said a little bitterly, "I shall not forget. I have not been wounded in the head! *Only in the heart!*" she added, as she turned away.

CHAPTER XIV.

AT THE HIGH ALTAR.

When Maurice von Lynar reached the open air he stood for full five minutes, light-headed in the rush of the city traffic. The loud iteration of rejoicing sounded heartless and even impertinent in his ear. The world had changed for the young Dane since the Count von Löen had been summoned by the Princess Margaret.

He cast his mind back over the interview, but failed to disentangle anything definite. It was a maze of impressions out of which grew the certainty that safely to play his difficult part he must obtain the whole confidence of the Duchess Joan.

He looked about for the Prince of Muscovy, but failed to see him. Though not anxious about the result, he was rather glad, for he did not want another quarrel on his hands till after the wedding. He would see the Princess Margaret there. If he played his cards well with the bride he might even be sent to escort her.

So he made his way to the magnificent suite of apartments where the Duchess was lodged. The Prince had ordered everything with great consideration. Her own horsemen patrolled the front of the palace, and the Courtland guards were for the time being wholly withdrawn.

It seemed strange—Joan of the Sword Hand, who not so long ago had led many a dashing foray and been the foremost in many a brisk encounter, a bride! It could not be that once he had imagined her the fairest woman under the sun, and himself, for her sake, the most miserable of men. Thus do lovers deceive themselves when the new has come to obliterate the old. Some can even persuade themselves that the old never had any existence.

The young Dane found the Duchess walking up and down on the noble promenade which faced the river to the west. For the water curved in a spacious elbow about the city of Courtland, and the Palace was placed in the angle.

Maurice von Lynar stood awhile respectfully waiting for the Duchess to recognise him. Werner, John of Thorn, or any of her Kernsberg captains would have gone directly up to her. But this youth had been trained in another school.

Joan of Hohenstein stood a while without moving, looking out upon the river. She thought with a kind of troubled shyness of the morrow, oft dreamed of, long expected. She saw the man whom she was not known ever to have seen—the noble young man of the tournament, the gracious Prince of the summer parlour, courteous and dignified alike to the poor secretary of embassy and to his sister the Princess Margaret of Courtland. Surely there never was anyone like him, proudly thought this girl, as she looked across the river at the rich plain studded with far-smiling farms and fields just waking to life after their long winter sleep.

"Ah, Von Lynar, my brave Dane, what good wind brings you here?" she cried. "I declare I was longing for someone to talk to." A consciousness of need which had only just come upon her.

"I have seen the Princess Margaret," said the youth slowly, "and I think that she must mistake me for some other person. She spoke things most strange to me. But fearing I might meddle with affairs wherewith I had no concern, I forbore to correct her."

The eyes of the Duchess danced. A load seemed suddenly lifted off her mind.

"Was she very angry?" she queried.

"Very!" returned Von Lynar, smiling in recognition of her smile.

"What said the Princess?"

"First she would have it that my name and style was that of the Count von Löen. Then she reproached me fiercely because I

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"Joan of Hohenstein stood a while without moving, looking out upon the river."

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denied it. After that she spoke of certain foreign customs she had been taught, recalled walks through corridors and rose gardens with me, till my head swam and I knew not what to answer."

Joan of the Sword Hand laughed a merry peal.

"The Count von Löen, did she say?" she meditated. "Well, so you are the Count von Löen. I create you the Count von Löen now. I give you the title. It is mine to give. By to-morrow I shall have done with all these things. And since as the Count von Löen I drank the wine, it is fair that you, who have to pay the reckoning, should be the Count von Löen also."

"My father was noble, and I am his only son—that is, alive," said Maurice, a little drily. To his mind the Count von Lynar, of the order of the Dannebrog, had no need of any other distinction.

"But I give you also therewith the estates which pertain to the title. They are situated on the borders of Reichenau. I am so happy to-night that I would like to make all the world happy. I am sorry for all the folk I have injured."

"Love changes all things," said the Dane sententiously.

The Duchess looked at him quickly.

"You are in love—with the Princess Margaret?" she said.

The youth blushed a deep crimson which flooded his neck and dyed his dusky skin.

"Poor Maurice!" she said, touching his bowed head with her hand, "your troubles will not be to seek."

"My lady," said the youth, "I fear not trouble. I have promised to serve the Princess in all things. She has been kind to me. She has forgiven me all."

"So—you are to change your allegiance," said the Duchess. "It is as well that I have made you Count von Löen, and so in a manner bound you to me, or you would be going off into another's service with all my secrets in your keeping. Not that it will matter very much—after to-morrow!" she added, with a glance at the wing of the palace which held the summer parlour. "But how did you manage to appease her? That is no mean feat. She is an imperious lady and quick of understanding."

Then Maurice von Lynar told his mistress of his most allowable falsehoods, and begged her not to undeceive the Princess, for that he would rather bear all that she might put upon him than that she should know he had lied to her.

"Do not be afraid," said the Duchess, laughing, "it was I who tangled the skein. So far you have unravelled it very well. The least I can do is to leave you to unwind it to the end, my brave Count von Löen."

So they parted, the Duchess to her apartment, and the young man to pace up and down the stone-flagged promenade all night, thinking of the distracting whimsies of the Princess, of the hopelessness of his love, and, most of all, of how daintily exquisite and altogether desirable was her beauty of face, of figure, of temper, of everything!

For the Sparhawk was not a lover to make reservations.

* * * * *

The morning of the great day dawned cool and grey. A sunshade of misty cloud overspread the city and tempered the heat. It had come up on the morning wind from the Baltic, and by eight the ships at the quays, and the tall, beflagged festal masts in the streets through which the procession was to pass, ran clear up into it and were lost, so that the standards and pennons on their tops could not be seen any more than if they had been amongst the stars.

The streets were completely lined with the folk of the city of Courtland as the Princess Margaret, with the Sparhawk and his company of lances clattering behind her, rode to the entrance of the great palace where abode the bride-elect.

"Who is that youth?" asked Margaret of Courtland of Joan, as they came out together; she looked at the Dane—"he at the head of your first troops? He looks like your brother."

"He has often been taken for such!" said the bride. "He is called the Count von Löen!"

The Princess did not reply, and as the two fair women came out arm in arm, a sudden glint of sunlight broke through the leaden clouds and fell upon them, glorifying the white dress of the one, and the blue and gold apparel of the other.

The bells of the minster clanged out a changeful thunder of brazen acclaim as the bride set out for the first time (so they told each other on the streets) to see her promised husband.

"'Twas well we did not so manage our affairs, Hans," said a fishmonger's wife, touching her husband's arm archly.

"Nay, wife," returned the seller of fish; "whatever thou art, at least I cannot deny that I took thee with my eyes open!"

They reached the Rathhaus and the clamour

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"Prince Louis."

grew louder than ever. Presently they were at the cathedral and were making them ready to dismount. The bells in the towers above burst forth into yet more frantic jubilation. The cannons roared from the ramparts.

The Princess Margaret had delayed a little, either taking longer to her attiring, or, perhaps, gossipping with the bride. So that when the shouts in the wide Minster Place announced their arrival, all was in waiting within the great crowded church, and the bridegroom had gone in well-nigh half an hour before them. But that was in accord with the best traditions.

Very like a Princess and a great lady looked Joan of Hohenstein as she went up the aisle, with Margaret of Courtland by her side. She kept her eyes on the ground, for she meant to look at no one and behold nothing till she should see —that which she longed to look upon.

Suddenly she was conscious that they had stopped in the middle of a vast silence. The candles upon the great altar threw down a golden lustre. Joan saw the irregular shining of them on her white bridal dress, and wondered that it should be so bright.

There was a hush over all the assembly, the silence of a great multitude all intent upon one thing.

"My brother, the Prince of Courtland!" said the voice of the Princess Margaret.

Slowly Joan raised her eyes—pride and happiness at war with a kind of glorious shame upon her face.

But that one look altered all things.

She stood fixed, aghast, turned to stone as she gazed. She could neither speak nor think. That which she saw almost struck her dead with horror.

The man whom his sister introduced as the Prince of Courtland was not the knight of the tournament. He was not the young prince of the summer palace. He was a man much older, more meagre of body, grey-headed, with an odd sidelong expression in his eyes. His shoulders were bent and he carried himself like a man prematurely old.

"Duchess Joan."

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And there, behind the altar-railing, clad in the scarlet of a prince of the church, and wearing the mitre of a bishop, stood the husband of her heart's deep thoughts, the man who had never been out of her mind all these weary months. He held a service book in his hand, and stood ready to marry Joan of Hohenstein to another.

The man who was called Prince of Courtland came forward to take her hand; but Joan stood with her arms firmly at her sides. The terrible nature of her mistake flashed upon her and grew in horror with every moment. Fate seemed to laugh suddenly and mockingly in her face. Destiny shut her in.

"Are you the Prince of Courtland?" she asked; and at the sound of her voice, unwontedly clear in the great church, even the organ appeared to still itself. All listened intently, though only a few heard the conversation.

"I have that honour," bowed the man with the bent shoulders.

"Then, as God lives, I will never marry you!" cried Joan, all her soul in the disgust of her voice.

"Be not disdainful, my lady," said the bridegroom mildly; "I will be your humble slave. You shall have a palace and an establishment of your own, an' it like you. The marriage was your father's desire, and hath the sanction of the Emperor. It is as necessary for your State as for mine."

Then, while the people waited in a kind of palpitating uncertainty, the Princess Margaret whispered to the bride, who stood with a face as ashen pale as her white dress.

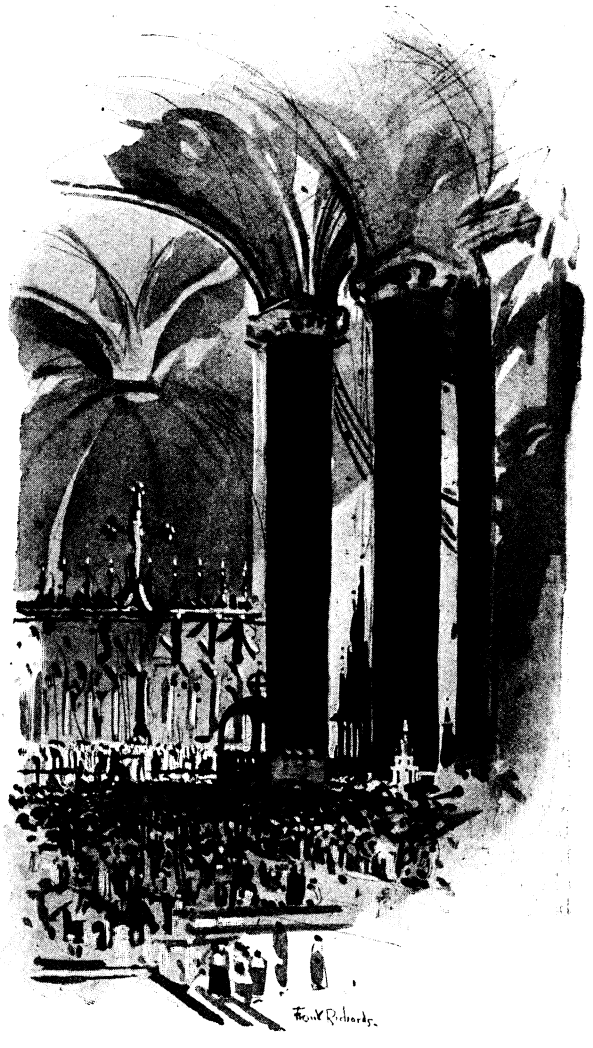
Sometimes she looked at the Prince of Courtland, and then immediately averted her eyes. But never, after the first glance, did Joan permit them to stray to the face of him who stood behind the altar railings with his service book in his hand.

"Well," she said finally, "I *will* marry this man, since it is my fate. Let the ceremony proceed!"

"I thank you, gracious lady," said the Prince, taking her hand and leading his bride to the altar. "You will never regret it."

"No, but you will!" muttered his groomsman, the Prince Ivan of Muscovy.

The full, rich tones of the prince bishop rose and fell through the crowded minster as Joan of Hohenstein was married to his elder brother, and with the closing words of the episcopal benediction an awe fell upon the multitude. They felt that they were in the presence of great unknown forces, the action and interaction of which might lead no man knew whither.



"The candles upon the great altar threw down a golden lustre."

At the close of the service, Joan, now Princess of Courtland, leaned over and whispered a word to her captain, Maurice von Lynar, an action noticed by few. The young man started and gazed into her face; but, immediately commanding his emotion, he nodded and disappeared by a side door.

The great organ swelled out. The marriage

procession was re-formed. The prince bishop had retired to his sacristy to change his robes. The new Princess of Courtland came down the aisle on the arm of her husband.

Then the bells almost turned over in their fury of jubilation, and every cannon in the city bellowed out. The people shouted themselves hoarse, and the line of Courtland troops who kept the people back had great difficulty in restraining the enthusiasm which threatened to break all bounds and involve the married pair in a whirling tumult of acclaim.

In the centre of the Minster Place the four hundred lances of the Kernsberg escort had formed up, a serried mass of beautiful well-groomed horses, stalwart men, and shining spears, from each of which the pennon of their mistress fluttered in the light wind.

"Ha! there they come at last! See them on the steps!" The shouts rang out, and the people flung their headgear wildly into the air. The line of Courtland foot saluted, but no cheer came from the array of Kernsberg lances.

"They are sorry to lose her—and no small wonder. Well, she is ours now!" the people cried, congratulating one another as they shook hands and the wine gurgled out of the pigskins into innumerable thirsty mouths.

On the steps of the minster, after they had descended more than half-way, the new Princess of Courtland turned upon her lord. Her hand slipped from his arm, which hung a moment crooked and empty before it dropped to his side. His mouth was a little open with surprise. Prince Louis knew that he was wedding a wilful dame, but he had not been prepared for this.

"Now, my lord," said the Princess Joan, loud and clear. "I have married you. The bond of heritage-brotherhood is fulfilled. I have obeyed my father to the letter. I have obeyed the Emperor. I have done all. Now be it known to you and to all men that I will neither live with you nor yet in your city. I am your wife in name. You shall never be my husband in aught else. I bid you farewell, Prince of Courtland. Joan of Hohenstein may marry where she is bidden, but she loves where she will."

The horse upon which she had come to the minster stood waiting. There was the Sparhawk ready to help her into the saddle.

Ere one of the wedding guests could move to prevent her, before the Prince of Courtland could cry an order or decide what to do, Joan of the Sword Hand had placed herself at the head of her four hundred lances, and was riding through the shouting streets towards the Plassenburg gate.

The people cheered as she went by, clearing the way that she might not be annoyed. They thought it part of the day's show and voted the Kernsbergers a gallant band, well set up and right bravely arrayed.

So they passed through the gate in safety. The noble portal was all aflutter with colour, the arms of Hohenstein and Courtland being quartered together on a great wooden plaque over the main entrance.

As soon as they were clear the Princess Joan turned in her saddle and spake to the four hundred behind her.

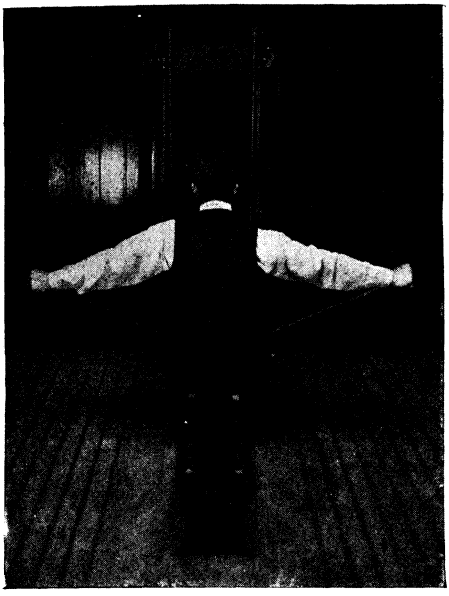
"We ride back to Kernsberg," she cried. "Joan of the Sword Hand is wed, but not yet won. If they would keep her they must first catch her. Are you with me, lads of the hills?"

There came a unanimous shout of, "Aye—to the death!" from four hundred throats.

"Then give me a sword and put the horses to their speed. We ride for home. Let them catch us who can!"

And this was the true fashion of the marrying of Joan of the Sword Hand, Duchess of Hohenstein, to the Prince Louis of Courtland, by his brother, Bishop Conrad, Cardinal and Prince of the Holy Church.

(*To be continued.*)



ASTON DOING 500 TIMES ON THE ROWING MACHINE TO DEVELOP THE MUSCLES OF THE LEGS.

A FOOTBALLERS' HOSPITAL.

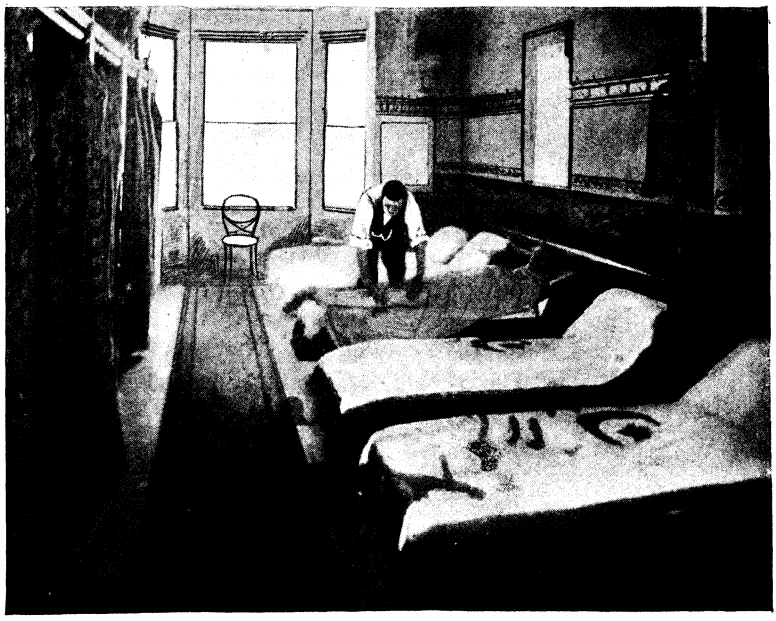
By M. Randal Roberts.

Photographs by Banks, Manchester.

ITS official title is Matlock House, Manchester, but it is popularly known as "The Footballers' Hospital"; and, considering that it has housed and healed nearly every well-known footballer who has had the bad luck to be maimed or injured, the description is an accurate one. As in the case of many other successful ventures, the origin of the footballers' hospital was more or less due to chance. Some twenty years ago the proprietor of Matlock House was a young man devoting himself to the study of massage. In the course of his study he visited America and Sweden, where he acquired such a thorough knowledge of his art that on his return to England he was called in to attend professionally on a well-known Bolton millionaire and M.P. The millionaire was so impressed with the effectiveness of his attendant's treatment that on his death he left Mr. Allison a very handsome legacy to be devoted to the purpose of extending his system of massage. So Matlock House came into being.

In those days nothing was further from Mr. Allison's thoughts than to become a specialist for footballers' wounds. Matlock House was originally intended to be simply a hydro for ordinary patients requiring Mr. Allison's treatment, and for the first years of its existence it was resorted to mainly by hunting men who had met with accidents. However, one or two footballers gradually found their way into the famous establishment. Then Mr. J. J. Bentley, the president of the Football League and editor of the *Athletic News*, interested himself in the matter, with the result that Matlock House soon became the recognised hospital for maimed footballers.

Mr. Allison probably knows more about professional football players



ASTON BEING MASSAGED FOR HIS INJURED KNEE.

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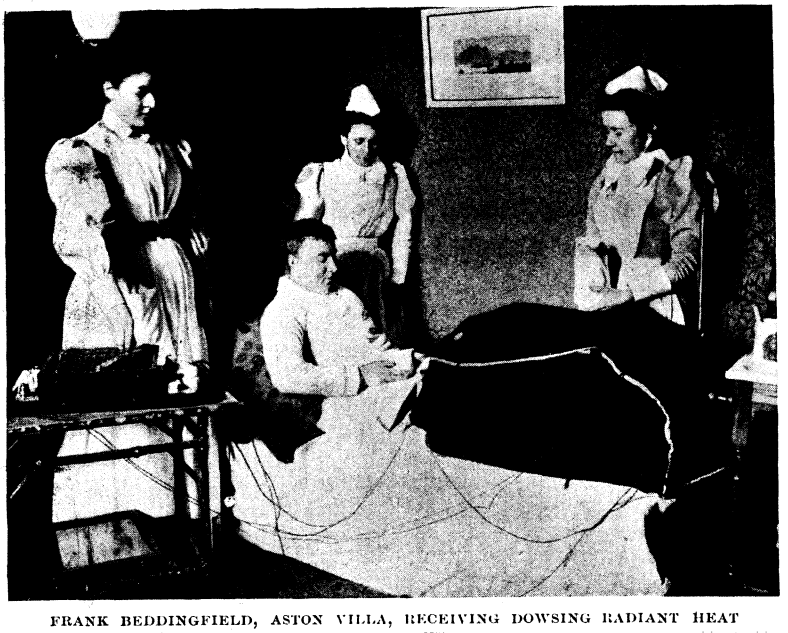
than any man living. He has had most of them under his care at one time or other, and, as he says, you can learn more of the true inwardness of a man's character in a week at Matlock House than you would gather in a year elsewhere; for Mr. Allison is, to a certain extent, the jailer of his football patients as well as their physician. Footballers, like most other people, are fond of their liberty, and one of the rules of Matlock House is that if an inmate doesn't obey orders he must go elsewhere.

Injuries on the football field, by the way, are not at all the ghastly affairs they are sometimes supposed to be. A football player's two most vulnerable points are his knee and his ankle, and nine out of every ten cases that come into the hospital are suffering from injuries to those parts. And even then the injuries are seldom caused by a blow; when a footballer breaks down it almost invariably means that his knee or his ankle has given way owing to the strain imposed upon it by running, kicking and tackling. Anyone who follows the reports of football matches at all closely must be familiar with a newspaper "par" to the effect that So-and-so badly injured himself in Saturday's match and was subsequently sent to Matlock House. Now, supposing So-and-so's injury to have been a damaged knee, what will happen to him on his arrival at the footballers' hospital will be this. First and foremost he will be carefully examined by Mr. Allison or one of the attendants. If the injury is of a nature requiring surgical treatment, So-and-so will immediately be put into the hands of the visiting surgeon. If no surgical aid is required, Mr. Allison will at once proceed to mete out his own special treatment. The first step in this treatment is to fit a machine to the patient's leg which will keep the knee in constant movement. This machine of Mr. Allison's, by the way, is rather a wily contrivance; it serves the double purpose of helping to heal the knee and effectively curbing the wearer's propensity to roam. Footballers are not fond of captivity, and most of them after being a day or two in the hospital show a strong inclination to get outside and explore the beauties of Manchester, especially as Mr. Allison regulates his household on strictly teetotal principals.

When he is freed from the trammels of this machine the damaged footballer is next subjected to a course of what is called radiant heat treatment. It isn't easy to describe on paper all the details of this treatment, but, to put it briefly, it mainly consists in applying a tremendous heat by means of electricity, and localising it upon the injured part of the limb. It is essentially a dry heat, and under its process a temperature of no less than 500 degrees can be endured without discomfort. In fact, so far from causing any unpleasant sensation, the effect of this radiant heat is a sense of rest and freedom from pain.



FRANK BEDDINGFIELD, ASTON VILLA, RECEIVING DOWSING RADIANT HEAT TREATMENT.

Where footballers are concerned it isn't merely enough to cure them — they must be cured rapidly. Often with a Cup tie or an important League match before his eyes, Mr. Allison has had an anxious week or fortnight, but he almost invariably manages to bring the player up to the scratch. The sixty-five thousand spectators who witnessed the final tie between Aston

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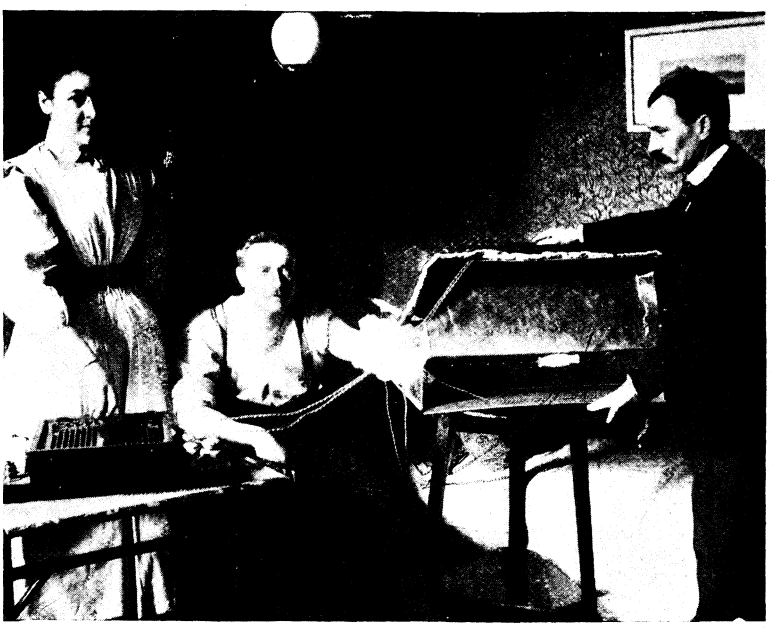
Villa and Everton at the Crystal Palace in 1897 had very little idea of how far the fortunes of the Villa that day depended on Mr. Allison. For nearly a month before the match Crabtree had been in the footballers' hospital with a damaged knee. It would have been a comparatively easy matter to have got him right in a couple of months; but Mr. Allison's task was to bring him up fit for that particular match. As it turned out, Crabtree played right through the game without any mishap, but he was in Mr. Allison's hands up to within a few minutes of the start of the game, and when the interval arrived Mr. Allison might have been seen making a bee-line for the players' room, so that he could give Crabtree another five minutes' doctoring before the second half of the game started.



MELLOR, STOKE FOOTBALL CLUB, RECEIVING DOWSING RADIANT HEAT BATH FOR THE ARM.

Mr. Allison considers Crabtree one of his most interesting patients; not altogether from a mere medical point of view, but owing to his method of amusing himself when in hospital. Most footballers develop some peculiar fad for helping to pass the time while under treatment, but Crabtree's fad ran on distinctly original lines. Instead of trying to elude the vigilance of his attendants, and spending a boisterous afternoon in Manchester, Crabtree devoted his leisure hours to the study of shirts. Some of the professional footballers during their stay at Matlock House scorn the meretricious adornment of a collar and tie, and consider a "sweater" or football jersey a satisfactory invalid costume. But in the matter of raiment Crabtree is a purist, and especially in the matter of linen. During his last stay at the hospital, the famous half-back devoted his time to evolving something entirely new in shirts. He wasn't satisfied with any of the existing patterns, and wouldn't rest content till he had given an order to a Manchester firm for a supply of new shirts which were absolutely original in the design of their pattern.

Before a patient can be warranted perfectly fit for action he has to prove his recovery to Mr. Allison's satisfaction in practice as well as in theory. In other words, Mr. Allison won't pass any footballer as perfectly sound till he has seen him perform on the football field. The place where these trials of convalescent footballers come off is the Manchester City Club ground, which is situated close to the hospital. During one of these trials Mr. Allison had a curious experience with Howard Spencer, the famous International and Aston Villa full-back.

Spencer's knee had been very badly injured, and refused to be healed with an obstinacy passing even the obstinacy of footballers' knees. However, one day, when it appeared that the cure was at last complete, Mr. Allison took his patient down to the Hyde Road ground to put the cure to a practical test. But the ground happened to be in a dreadfully slippery condition, and at first Mr. Allison felt doubtful whether they ought not to postpone the trial, as a slip might have proved disastrous to Spencer. However, he finally made up his mind to let the trial take place, and without mentioning his misgivings ordered Spencer to kick the ball about for a few minutes.

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The trial was perfectly satisfactory. Spencer kicked as well as ever he had done in his life, and seemed as sure on his feet as if he had been standing in his own bedroom. Nothing very astonishing about this, perhaps, for an International full-back who was accustomed to keep his legs in all sorts and conditions of mud. The surprising fact came a week after, when Mr. Allison took Spencer for another trial trip on the same ground. On this occasion the ground was as dry as a bone, and Mr. Allison explained to his patient how nervous he had felt over the previous trial, and his joy at finding that no harm had been done. This was the first Spencer had heard of the possible consequences of a slip, and the effect of the news was instantaneous. Though there was no possible chance of his slipping, Spencer seemed paralysed with nervousness. Like Agag, he walked delicately, and devoted so much attention to his knee that the football was practically neglected.

FRANK BEDDINGFIELD, ASTON VILLA, HAVING SWEDISH VIBRATOR APPLIED TO HIS KNEE.

The fact of the matter was that Spencer was over anxious to take his place in the Villa team again, and Mr. Allison believes that this over-anxiety would very probably have led to a real disaster if the second trial had been continued much longer. In this respect Bennett, the Sheffield United flyer, closely resembles Spencer. Bennett is always a difficult patient to manage; he has apparently firmly impressed himself with the public importance of the maxim that England expects every man to do his duty—even in a football team—and in his anxiety to return to his team he always retards his recovery by overdoing the work prescribed by Mr. Allison, unless very carefully watched. But it mustn't be supposed that this is a weakness common to the race of professional footballers. Nothing is more difficult to diagnose than an injury to the knee, and sometimes when a player desires a holiday at his committee's expense he is seized with a sudden attack of lameness, in the hope of qualifying for a fortnight's rest in the footballers' hospital. For such cases as these Mr. Allison has invented a special plaster, which he calls his "sham detector." The exact composition of this plaster is a secret, but its chief virtue is that it is diabolically painful as well as lasting in its effects.

Most of Mr. Allison's football patients come from the Association game, but from time to time he has had some "Rugger" notabilities under his charge. When the present writer went over the hospital for the purposes of this article, he saw Chapman, the famous Broughton Ranger, among the patients, and, not very long before, Valentine, the old International and Swinton player, had paid Mr. Allison a flying visit. Valentine's case was not unlike Crabtree's; the difficulty was not to get him fit, but to get him fit by a certain date. During the last week of Valentine's stay in hospital Mr. Allison had to play the part of trainer as well as physician, and anyone

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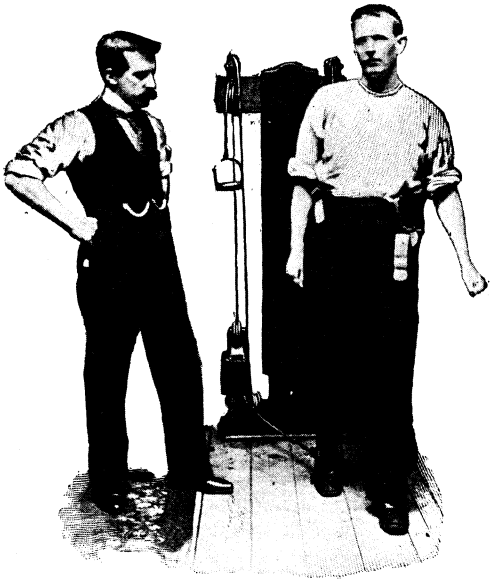


JOHN BELL, GRIMSBY TOWN, DOING EXERCISES.

who has ever played football knows the difficulty of getting a player fit in a week when he has been allowed to run right out of condition.

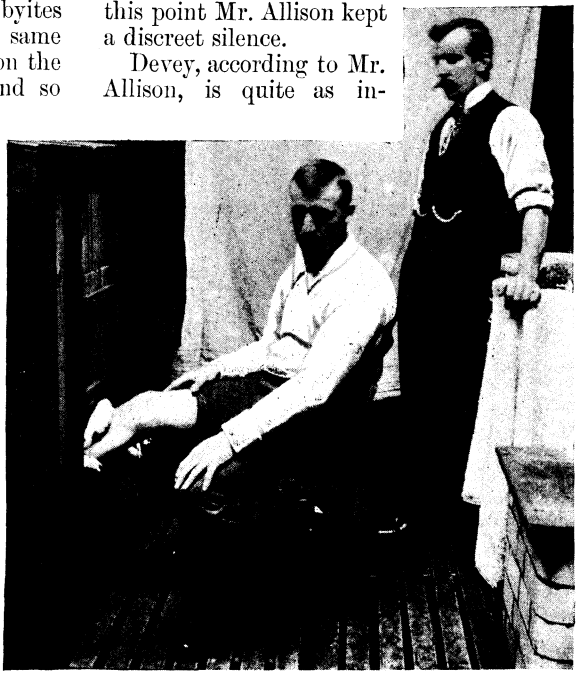
There is plenty of what an Irishman would call "divarsion" to be found in the hospital when a crowd of Associationists and Rugbyites happen to be under treatment at the same time. Each set of players is so keen on the merits of his own particular code, and so enthusiastic about proclaiming them, that the hospital for the time being becomes a debating society. During one of these debates a certain well-known Scotch International clinched his argument, after the manner of a Scotchman, by an appeal to the bawbee-making side of the question. "You talk," he remarked to a Rugby player, "about your wonderful Northern Union. What wages do you Northern Union players get? Well, whatever you make it, let me tell you that I get seven pounds a week all the year round. If I couldn't earn as much as two or three of your players put together, I'd chuck football altogether and take to something else that would pay me better."

Now, this remark may have answered the purpose of clinching his argument, but it led to a somewhat unexpected sequel. The exact salaries of some of the players in the League clubs are always shrouded in mystery. Some of the players no doubt do receive very much bigger wages than others, but the precise amount is kept a secret between the players themselves and the committees of their clubs, the object of this secrecy being to prevent any jealousy between the highly paid players and their less fortunate clubmates. But in his burst of confidence the Scotch International had given the show away. His wages were possibly what he stated them to be, but nobody was supposed to know this, and of course the story was soon noised abroad, with the result that the indiscreet player was promptly hauled over the coals by his committee. Whether the matter was settled by his own wages being reduced, or those of his clubmates being raised, history doesn't say.

And talking of Scotchmen reminds me that Mr. Allison declares that the most satisfactory of all patients are Scotchmen who play for Scotch clubs; but that the same men, when they join an English club, for some reason or other often become completely changed and show a marked inclination to kick against all hospital discipline.

When I asked Mr. Allison who his best patients were, he replied at once, "Crabtree, Sutcliffe, Bennett, and Devey." "And your worst patients?" But on this point Mr. Allison kept a discreet silence.

Devey, according to Mr. Allison, is quite as in-



GEORGE MOUNTAIN, GRIMSBY TOWN, HAVING HIS LEG FOMENTED IN VAPOUR BATH.

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teresting a patient as Crabtree. The Aston Villa captain is great on patent medicines and medical knowledge generally. He has all sorts of cures of his own for every sort of ailment, and learnedly discourses with his physician on the merits of all new-fangled cures. Devey's interest in these subjects doesn't wane when he leaves the hospital. From his home in Birmingham he keeps up a correspondence with Mr. Allison about the pros and cons of certain treatment for damaged footballers. Devey would be an interesting figure, if only for the fact that he is the solitary instance of a professional footballer who has made a study of physiology.

There is one infallible method of recognising any player who has ever been an inmate of the footballers' hospital. Everyone of his patients are stamped with Mr. Allison's hall mark, so to speak. Mr. Allison's final test of whether a player's knee is in a fit condition for playing is to make him double back till his heel can touch the inside of his thigh. If the patient can do this without any pain or inconvenience, he can be safely warranted sound, so far as his knee is concerned, at any rate. It is quite a common sight at a League match to see a player who has been injured applying this test to himself, and whenever you see this operation being performed, you may lay to it, as John Silver would say, that the performer has at some time or other been under Mr. Allison's care. But don't be led away into trying this test on your own leg, and thinking that you are suffering from water on the knee or a floating cartilage if your leg won't bend back to the required angle. The test is only meant for footballers; your knee may be as fit as the proverbial fiddle, but unless you have been in the habit of kicking a football your muscles will lack the necessary suppleness.

Mr. Allison has one unsatisfied ambition. From the portrait gallery of famous players who have been inmates of the footballers' hospital one conspicuous figure is absent. Mr. Allison has never as yet had an opportunity of running his rule over William Foulke, the leviathan "gaoler" of the Sheffield United club. The classical method of describing Foulke is to use the epithet "gigantic" or "colossal." Readers of the WINDSOR will please note that "leviathan" is an original variation, and that the expression is copyright. The nearest Mr. Allison ever came to catching his hare was when Foulke was laid out in a League match a couple of years ago, by receiving on his head a kick intended for the ball. Nothing under a kick on the head, by the way, would lay out Foulke. Most of the players had heard that Foulke's weight was nineteen stone, and his height 6 ft. 2 in., but it was only when it took four of them to carry him off the field that they practically realised what manner of flesh and bone he was. It is a standing joke at the footballers' hospital that, whenever Foulke comes in, an extra large edition of all the appliances will have to be specially ordered for him. Seriously, Mr. Allison, in common with all other lovers of football, hopes that the day may be long distant when Foulke will require medical aid or surgical appliances.

THE HOSPITAL DINING-ROOM.

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"He sent her documents giving her control of their child."

"Gracious! I wish I knew where to obtain documents that would give us control of *our* child!"

An Englishman and a Scotchman were touring through the Highlands together. Presently they came upon a deep dip in the road near a broad river. On the other side of the dip was a farmhouse, while in the centre of the depression in the road itself was a sign-post bearing the inscription: "When the post is covered by the overflow of the river, please inquire at the farmhouse." The Englishman read the directions, and, recognising the fact that when the sign-post was covered it would be absolutely impossible to pass over to the farmhouse, burst out into uproarious laughter.

"What is the matter?" inquired the Scotchman roughly.

"Read that sign," responded the Englishman.

The Scotchman did as directed, but turned to the Englishman and said, "Well, what about it?"

"Don't you see the joke?" asked the Englishman.

The Scotchman shook his head slowly and was wrapped in deep thought for the rest of the day.

After tossing about in his bed for several hours that night trying to find the point which had amused his English friend so intensely, he suddenly jumped up, made his way to the Englishman's room, and quietly roused his friend.

"What's up?" demanded the Englishman.

"I see that joke," responded the Scotchman, with a chuckle.

"Well, what is it?"

"Ha! ha! Why, the farmer might be out!" was the Scotchman's triumphant retort.

Johnny: You know, auntie, papa was telling me about little Bo-Peep, and he said, "Little Bo-Peep, *he* lost his sheep."

Auntie: Really!

Johnny: Yes; he thought Little Bo-Peep was a boy, instead of a girl. Papa does make *awful* mistakes sometimes.

The burglar's wife was in the witness-box, and the prosecuting attorney was conducting a vigorous cross-examination.

"Madam, you are the wife of this man?"

"Yes."

"You knew he was a burglar when you married him?"

"Yes."

"How did you come to contract a matrimonial alliance with such a man?"

"Well," the witness said sarcastically, "I was getting old, and had to choose between a lawyer and a burglar."

THE DESERT ISLE.

How oft at eve, when summer suns have set,
I sadly linger by the sea awhile,
Remembering, when shipwreck'd, how I met
My soul's ideal on a desert isle.

At first I thought that I was there alone,
The sole survivor on that palm-girt shore;
Next day her radiant presence on me shone,
Elise was cast there just six months before.

Now she had lost a husband, I a wife.
Elise had fed on nuts, and fruit, and seeds,
Rejoiced at absence from the world's rough strife,
Regretting that she wore no widow's weeds.

In calm, æsthetic talk we passed our days,
The sea beneath us shining—sky above,
At times we chanted soft, melodious lays,
Until we recognised the power of love.

No friends or enemies to see our bliss,
Alone on that fair desert island caged,
The mystery of one sweet, lingering kiss,
And we two entities became engaged.

We placed a signal on the topmost height,
A source of wonder both to bird and beast
We wished to undergo the marriage rite,
And hoped some passing ship would bear a priest.

At length a ship approached, we went on board.
How strange the bitter ironies of life,
She, who I fondly hoped would call me lord!
Beheld her husband, and I met my wife.

W. AUBREY CHANDLER.

Jones: Do you think that a man can serve two masters?

Smith: Well, sometimes; he may have a wife and a grown daughter, you know!

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OUR GLEE.

By George G. Magnus.

I, MARY F——, have been persuaded, never mind by whom, to write a description of a temperance lecture delivered by pa, and a glee that was sung—I suppose I must say sung—after it. As I'm not a literary individual, I shall just relate our painful experiences as they occurred, without intermixing any imaginary incidents to set them off.

I still blush when I think of that weird evening, but I will tell you all that happened, and then you will sympathise with me. To begin with, pa made a complete mess of the lecture—but we all knew he would! Poor pa! he didn't discover that he hadn't his carefully written discourse with him until he had made his bow to the audience. Then, when he couldn't find it, he began getting angry! Pa, I am sorry to say, has a really shocking temper, and what's so peculiar about it is that when it gets roused his voice gets roused, too, and increases its volume in comparison. His voice grew awfully loud on this occasion!

He came off the platform, and swore, in his assertive way to ma, that he was positive, perfectly positive, he had brought it, and that it must have been stolen from him! Then, when ma said she knew he had brought it, he turned round completely (as is his way) and said he had done nothing of the kind, and that it was no use arguing further about it, because he now remembered that, in the hurry of getting us off in time, he had thoughtlessly left it on his study table! Harry, my eldest brother, was sent off for it at once. Before he could have gone a hundred yards, a second brother was despatched, and so on. By the time Harry might have reached home, the whole family—ma and I excepted, only because we refused point-blank—were on the road.

We had just half-persuaded, half-forced pa to go on, and begin on his own resources, when Tubby, my fourth brother, arrived limp and breathless. Before we could prevent him he rushed on to the platform, wildly waving the lecture, and crying, "I've found it! I've found it!" at the top of his shrill little voice. Pa, who by now had completely lost his temper, turned round. "May I ask, then, where you did find it?" he roared.

"In your whisky-cupboard!" gasped Tubby. There were cries of "Oh" from the back rows at this.

Tubby is so horribly literal, you know—but the poor boy can sit down all right now!

The audience—which to my horror was composed chiefly of our own friends—was in fits of laughter from the beginning of the oration to the finish—but I forgot! Pa didn't finish it! No! he came off, halfway, deeply hurt because, he said, he could not hear himself speak.

But no wonder they laughed! He commenced by reading, "I am truly delighted to see such a large gathering of the true British working-classes before me this evening," and continued in the same strain. For pa had thought, like the rest of us—or I (for one) would never have given my services, you may be sure—that the audience would be composed of the lower classes, and had therefore couched his address accordingly. He hadn't time to notice his mistake before he took himself off in a huff.

The glee, which was to be a nice finish to the lecture, was decidedly worse than the oration. I had to conduct this, and ma was to officiate at the piano. From the beginning I felt uneasy about ma, because, poor dear, she gets so easily flustered. However, I really believe that the audience, which had been so worked up by the lecture, would by now have laughed at anything!

Dear ma came in with a rush to the piano. I could see she was already slightly agitated. I mounted my orange-box on which I stood to conduct. How I wish I hadn't! The girls on whom I had spent many weary hours, teaching them this glee, straggled in anyhow, most of them actually tittering at mamma, who for some unearthly reason had started playing the "Dead March in Saul" as a prelude!

I certainly don't see anything amusing in the "Dead March" myself, so why those girls tittered so I cannot to this day comprehend. Of course I can understand the audience roaring at it, as I believe they would by now have laughed at a funeral.

Well, I climbed off my orange-box and administered a gentle poke in my parent's ribs with my *bâton* to attract her attention. This gentle poke, I regret to say, so startled her that she uttered a piercing scream, and I'm not exaggerating when I say she sprang a clear three feet into the air!

This, however, was not all. I shouldn't have rebuked her for her unwomanly leap if she had landed on the platform, but when she came down on the top of my orange-box—the only one I had, too—we both (that is to say, the orange-box and I) found it too much to stand. So, before I extricated the poor dear from her undignified (to say the least of it) position, I am afraid I lost my temper, and in an angry voice told her how terribly thoughtless she had been, as she must have known that no orange-box, however strongly made, would stand such a weight suddenly dropped upon it from the height of three feet! I didn't say anything more, as she seemed penitent, but helped with others to reseat her on the piano stool.

Having reversed my orange-box, and having made it clear that we had had enough prelude, we made a start. At least I should say ma did, for she began at such a frightful pace that the girls became frightened and would not open their mouths. This somewhat surprised her and she turned round. I could see then that she was getting flustered. However, she started afresh, but this time played so loudly that—although I had just upon finished the last line, and the girls the last but two—we couldn't keep very good time—no one thought we had even started. Harry says everyone imagined we were being favoured with another prelude!

I dismounted once more, and this time quietly suggested that mamma should not strive to finish before we had begun, and I also gently asked her to keep the soft pedal on. With a wild rush I vainly endeavoured to mount my orange-box

before ma could resume playing, but failing in this, I, with great presence of mind, increased the usual pace till we caught her up again. After this we began to get on first-rate, however; I felt quite hopeful, in fact.

The audience had stopped laughing—I really believe for the first time that evening. Four girls, at least, were singing, and if we could have kept this style up, I feel positive that four more, who were mechanically opening and shutting their mouths, would have eventually launched forth. But we didn't keep it up—at least, the box — whose constitution had been, I suppose, thoroughly undermined by the violent contact with my dear parent—didn't keep *me* up. It snapped in two with a loud report, and shot me in a revengeful fashion against ma, who was playing her loudest with both feet on the soft pedal! My *bâton*, which, by the by, was Harry's best cane, hit one of the girls in the eye, whereupon, without the slightest hesitation, she began screeching that she was blinded for life! Then, to crown all, my weight overbalanced mamma, and, to save herself from falling, she clutched me by the left arm with such a vice-like grip that I have still the bruises on my arm! To preserve my balance I naturally caught at the nearest object, which happened to be the piano.

CAMPING OUT.

From a photograph by Bara, Ayr.

Unluckily, however, our joint weight was too much for the piano, which was fitted with patent rollers to enable easy moving. Imagine my horror as I felt it slowly slipping towards the spot where poor ma was now gradually disappearing to join the audience below. She wouldn't even then let go of my arm, although she knew that handsome Jack Maitland was in the audience looking at me. Oh! it was an awful moment, the worst I ever have experienced. There was a dead silence, a terrible hush.

I can still remember the last glimpse I caught of ma's agonised expression. Then, with a heart-rending crash, we all fell into the ferns below, which were kindly lent for the occasion. (Of course I don't mean lent on purpose to break our fall. Jack says he thinks perhaps you might think that.) I, luckily, fell on mamma, and—which was luckier still—we both fell clear of the piano.

The scene after this accident baffles description. The way the men present behaved was a disgrace to a Christian country! They all seemed to be lying about in helpless masses with their mouths open and their sides quivering, and I never in all my life heard such painfully convulsive laughter.

Papa took us home in a cab. Dear Jack Maitland — the only real gentleman there — helped him to put us into it. He certainly couldn't speak much, but he — no! I'm not going to tell you what he did!

P.S.—We are all leading rather retired lives at present.

SHE (triumphantly): And I only paid half-a-crown a yard for that.

HE: Is it possible? Why, it must be worth five shillings a yard, at least!

SHE: Yes; but how did you know?

HE: Why, you *paid* half-a-crown.

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"YES, Fred told me that you jilted him. He thought you were awfully cruel."

"And what did you tell him?"

"I said that you were cruel only to be kind."

OLD GENTLEMAN: Why are you crying, my little man?

SMALL BOY (sobbing): I—I dreamt last night that the school burned down, and——

OLD GENTLEMAN (sympathetically): Oh! but I don't believe that it has!

SMALL BOY: Neither do I—I can see the top of it right over the hill!

SIR JOHN MILLAIS, while engaged in painting a landscape one day, suddenly noticed a rustic standing by his side, gazing attentively at the canvas. Sir John took no notice of his rural critic, who presently inquired, "Did yer never try fertography, sir?"

"No," replied Millais.

"It's much quicker," remarked the rustic.

"Yes, it is," rejoined the artist.

A few seconds' profound silence followed, and then the son of the soil blurted out, "And it's more like the picture!"

HIS WIFE: "Now don't fergit while ye're in the city to git some uv them 'lectric-light plants we heern so much about. We kin jis' ez well raise 'em ourselves, an' save kerosene."

EMPLOYER (meeting clerk on grand-stand): See here, Jenkins! You told me you would like to get off this afternoon and go to your mother-in-law's funeral.

CLERK: That's true, sir. I would like to do that first rate; only she isn't dead.

LITTLE BROTHER: Do you know what "ostentation" means?

LITTLE SISTER: The way other people show off.

ON the journey from Vienna to St. Petersburg, Cumberland, the well-known anti-spiritualist and thought-reader, entertained his fellow-passengers by guessing their thoughts. One of the travellers, a Polish Jew, who took the whole thing for a hoax, offered to pay Cumberland the sum of fifty roubles if he could divine his thoughts. Visibly amused, Cumberland acceded to his request and said—

"You are going to the fair at Nijni-Novgorod, where you intend to purchase goods to the extent of 20,000 roubles, after which you will declare yourself a bankrupt and compound with your creditors for 3 per cent."

On hearing these words the Jew gazed at the speaker with reverential awe. He then, without uttering a syllable, drew out of the leg of his boot a shabby purse and handed him the fifty roubles. Whereupon the magician triumphantly inquired—

"Then I have guessed your thoughts, eh?"

"No," replied the Jew; "but you have given me a brilliant idea."

RESTFUL WAYS: I take everything that comes my way.

SECOND STOREY BILL: So do I; and when they don't come I go after them.

FIRST INTELLIGENT CITIZEN: I never could see that them astronomers was much use, anyway.

SECOND DITTO DITTO: Why not?

FIRST I. C.: Well, here they're tellin' us there's a comet comin' flying towards the earth, and not a blamed one of them is doin' anything to prevent it.

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"'THEY CAME ON AGAIN, AND THERE WAS A BIT OF A SCRIMMAGE.'"

SEE RUDYARD KIPLING'S "STALKY & CO.," PAGE 531.

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STALKY & CO.

BY RUDYARD KIPLING.*

Illustrated by L. RAVEN HILL.

No. V.—A LITTLE PREP.

THE Easter term was but a month old when Stettson major, a day-boy, contracted diphtheria, and the Head was very angry. He decreed a new and narrower set of bounds—the infection had been traced to an outlying farmhouse—urged the prefects severely to lick all trespassers, and promised extra attentions from his own hand. There were no words bad enough for Stettson major, quarantined at his mother's house, who had lowered the school average of health. This he said in the gymnasium after prayers. Then he wrote some two hundred letters to as many anxious parents and guardians, and bade the school carry on. The trouble did not spread, but one night a dogcart drove to the Head's door, and in the morning the Head had gone, leaving all things in charge of Mr. King, senior house-master. The Head often ran up to town, where the school devoutly believed he bribed officials for early proofs of the Army Examination papers, but this absence was unusually prolonged.

"'Downy old bird," said Stalky to the Allies, one wet afternoon, in the study. "He must have gone on a bend an' been locked up, under a false name."

"What for?" Beetle entered joyously into the libel.

"Forty shillin's or a month for—hackin' the chucker-out of the Pavvy on the shins. Bates always has a spree when he goes to town. 'Wish he was back, though. I'm about sick o' King's 'whips an' scorpions' an' lectures on public-school spirit—yah!—and scholarship!"

"'Crass an' materialised brutality of the middle-classes—readin' solely for marks. Not a scholar in the whole school,'" McTurk quoted, pensively boring holes in the mantelpiece with a hot poker.

"That's rather a sickly way of spending an afternoon. 'Stinks, too! Let's come out an' smoke. Here's a treat." Stalky held up a long cheroot. "'Bagged that from my pater last holidays. I'm a bit shy of it, though: it's heftier than a pipe. We'll smoke it palaver-fashion. Hand it round, eh? Let's lie up behind the old harrow on the Monkey-farm road."

"Out of bounds. 'Bounds beastly strict these days, too. Besides, we shall cat." Beetle sniffed the cheroot critically. "It's a regular Pomposo Stinkadore."

"You can; I shan't. What d'you say, Turkey?"

"Oh, may's well, I s'pose."

"Chuck on your cap, then. It's two to one. Beetle, out you come!"

They saw a group of boys by the notice-board in the corridor, little Foxy, the school sergeant, among them.

"More bounds, I expect," said Stalky. "Hullo, Foxibus, who are you in mournin' for?" There was a broad band of crape round Foxy's arm.

"He was in my old regiment," said Foxy, jerking his head towards the notices, where a newspaper cutting was thumb-tacked between call-over lists.

"By gum!" quoth Stalky, uncovering as he read. "It's old Duncan—Fat-Sow Duncan—killed on duty at something or other Kotal. 'Rallyin' his men with conspicuous gallantry!' He would, of course. The body was recovered. That's all right. They cut 'em up sometimes, don't they, Foxy?"

"Horrid," said the Sergeant briefly.

"Poor old Fat-Sow! I was a fag when he left. How many does that make to us, Foxy?"

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"Mr. Duncan, he is the ninth. He come here when he was no bigger than little Grey tertius. My old regiment, too. Yiss, nine to us, Mr. Corkran, up to date."

The boys went out into the wet, walking swiftly.

"The Head fantastically attired in old tweeds and a deer-stalker."

"'Wonder how it feels—to be shot and all that," said Stalky, as they splashed down a lane. "Where did it happen, Beetle?"

"Oh, out in India somewhere. We're always rowin' there. But look here, Stalky, what *is* the good o' sittin' under a hedge an' cattin'? It's be-eastly cold. It's be-eastly wet, and we'll be collared as sure as a gun."

"Shut up! Did you ever know your Uncle Stalky get you into a mess yet?" Like many other leaders, Stalky did not dwell on past defeats.

They pushed through a dripping hedge, landed among water-logged clods, and sat down on a rust-coated harrow. The cheroot burned with sputterings of saltpetre. They smoked it gingerly, each passing it to the other between closed forefinger and thumb.

"Good job we hadn't one a-piece, ain't it?" said Stalky, shivering through set teeth. To prove his words he immediately laid all before them, and they followed his example . . .

"I told you," moaned Beetle, sweating clammy drops. "Oh, Stalky, you *are* a fool!"

"*Je cat, tu cat, il cat. Nous cattons!*" McTurk handed up his contribution and lay hopelessly on the cold iron.

"Something's wrong with the beastly thing. I say, Beetle, have you been droppin' ink on it?"

But Beetle was in no case to answer. Limp and empty, they sprawled across the harrow, the rust marking their ulsters in red squares and the abandoned cheroot-end reeking under their very cold noses. Then—they had heard nothing—the Head himself stood before them—the Head who should have been in town bribing examiners—the Head fantastically attired in old tweeds and a deer-stalker!

"Ah," he said, fingering his moustache. "Very good. I might have guessed who it was. You will go back to the College and give my compliments to Mr. King and ask him to give you an extra-special licking. You will then do me five hundred lines. I shall be back to-morrow. Five hundred lines by five o'clock to-morrow. You are also gated for a week. This is not exactly the time for breaking bounds. *Extra* special, please."

He disappeared over the hedge as lightly as he had come. There was a murmur of women's voices in the deep lane.

"Oh, you Prooshian brute!" said McTurk as the voices died away. "Stalky, it's all your silly fault."

"Kill him! Kill him!" gasped Beetle.

"I ca-an't. I'm going to cat again. . . I don't mind *that*, but King'll gloat over us horrid. Extra special, ooh!"

Stalky made no answer—not even a soft one. They went to College and received

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that for which they had been sent. King enjoyed himself most thoroughly, for by virtue of their seniority the boys were exempt from his hand, save under special order. Luckily, he was no expert in the gentle art.

"'Strange, how desire doth outrun performance,'" said Beetle irreverently, quoting

venom, "we aren't going to row you about this business, because it's too bad for a row; but we want you to understand you're jolly well excommunicated, Stalky. You're plain ass."

"How was I to know that the Head 'ud collar us? What was he doin' in those ghastly clothes, too?"

"'Something's wrong with the beastly thing.'"

from some Shakespeare play that they were cramming that term. They regained their study and settled down to the imposition.

"You're quite right, Beetle." Stalky spoke in silky and propitiating tones. "Now, if the Head had sent us up to a prefect we'd have got something to remember!"

"Look here," McTurk began with a cold

"Don't try to raise a side-issue," Beetle grunted severely.

"Well, it was all Stettson major's fault. If he hadn't gone an'got diphtheria'twouldn't have happened. But don't you think it rather rummy—the Head droppin' on us that way?"

"Shut up! You're dead!" said Beetle.

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"We've chopped your spurs off your beastly heels. We cocked your shield upside down and—and I don't think you ought to be allowed to brew for a month."

"Oh, stop jawin' at me. I want——"

"Stop? Why—why, we're gated for a week." McTurk almost howled as the agony of the situation overcame him. "A lickin' from King; five hundred lines; *and* a gating. D'you expect us to kiss you, Stalky, you beast?"

"Drop rottin' for a minute. I want to find out about the Head bein' where he was."

"Well, you *have*. You found him quite well and fit. Found him making love to Stettson major's mother. That was her in the lane—I heard her. And *so* we were ordered a licking before a day-boy's mother. 'Bony old widow, too," said McTurk. "'Anything else you'd like to find out?"

"I don't care. I swear I'll get even with him some day," Stalky growled.

"Looks like it," said McTurk. "Extra special, week's gatin', and five hundred . . . and now you're goin' to row about it! Help scrag him, Beetle!" Stalky had thrown his Virgil at them.

The Head returned next day without explanation, to find the lines waiting for him and the school a little relaxed under Mr. King's viceroyalty. Mr. King had been talking at and round and over the boys' heads, in a lofty and promiscuous style, of public-school spirit and the traditions of ancient seats; for he always improved an occasion. Beyond waking in two hundred and fifty young hearts a lively hatred of all other foundations, he accomplished little—so little, indeed, that when, two days after the Head's return, he chanced to come across Stalky and Co., gated but ever resourceful, playing marbles in the corridor, he said that he was not surprised—not in the least surprised. This was what he had expected from persons of their *morale*.

"But there isn't any rule against marbles, sir. Very interestin' game," said Beetle, his knees white with chalk and dust. Then he received two hundred lines for insolence, besides an order to go to the nearest prefect for judgment and slaughter.

This is what happened behind the closed doors of Flint's study, and Flint was then Head of the Games:—

"Oh, I say, Flint. King has sent me to you for playin' marbles in the corridor an' shoutin' 'alley tor' an' 'knuckle down.'"

"What does he suppose I have to do with that?" was the answer.

"Dunno. Well?" Beetle grinned wickedly. "What am I to tell him? He's rather wrathy about it."

"If the Head chooses to put a notice in the corridor forbiddin' marbles, I can do something; but I can't move on a housemaster's report. He knows that as well as I do."

The sense of this oracle Beetle conveyed, all unsweetened, to King, who hastened to interview Flint.

Now Flint had been seven and a half years at the College, counting six months with a London crammer, from whose roof he had returned, homesick, to the Head for the final Army polish. There were four or five other seniors who had gone through much the same mill, not to mention boys, rejected by other establishments on account of a certain overwhelmingness, whom the Head had wrought into very fair shape. But it was not a Sixth to be handled without gloves, as King found.

"Am I to understand it is your intention to allow Board-school games under your study windows, Flint? If so, I can only say——" He said much, and Flint listened politely.

"Well, sir, if the Head sees fit to call a prefects' meeting we are bound to take the matter up. But the tradition of the school is that the prefects can't move in any matter affecting the whole school without the Head's direct order."

Much more was then delivered, both sides a little losing their temper.

After tea, at an informal gathering of prefects in his study, Flint related the adventure.

"He's been playin' for this for a week, and now he's got it. You know as well as I do that if he hadn't been gassing at us the way he has, that young fool Beetle wouldn't have dreamed of marbles."

"We know that," said Perowne, "but that isn't the question. On Flint's showin' King has called us names enough to justify a first-class row. Crammers' rejections, ill-regulated hobbledehoys, wasn't it? Now it's impossible for prefects——"

"Rot," said Flint. "King's the best classical cram we've got; and 'tisn't fair to bother the Head with a row. He's up to his eyes with extra-tu. and Army work as it is. Besides, as I told King, we aren't a public school. We're a limited liability company payin' four per cent. My father's a shareholder, too."

"What's that got to do with it?" said Venner, a red-headed boy of eighteen.

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"Well, seems to me that we should be interferin' with ourselves. We've got to get into the Army or—get out. Haven't we? King's hired by the Council to teach us. All the rest's flumdiddle. Can't you see?"

It might have been because he felt the air was a little thunderous that the Head took his after-dinner cheroot to Flint's study; but he so often began an evening in a prefect's room that nobody suspected when he drifted in pensively after the knocks that etiquette demanded.

"Prefects' meeting?" A cock of one wise eyebrow.

"Not exactly, sir; we're just talking things over. Won't you take the easy-chair?"

"Thanks. Luxurious infants, you are." He dropped into Flint's big half-couch and puffed for awhile in silence. "Well, since you're all here, I may confess that I'm the mute with the bowstring."

The young faces grew serious. The phrase meant that certain of their number would be withdrawn from all further games for extra-tuition. It might also mean future success at Sandhurst; but it was present ruin for the First Fifteen.

"Yes, I've come for my pound of flesh. I ought to have had you out before the Exeter match; but it's our sacred duty to beat Exeter."

"Isn't the Old Boys' match sacred, too, sir?" said Perowne. The Old Boys' match was the event of the Easter term.

"We'll hope they aren't in training. Now for the list. First I want Flint. It's the Euclid that does it. You must work deductions with me. Perowne, extra mechanical drawing. Dawson goes to Mr. King for extra Latin, and Venner to me for German. Have I damaged the First Fifteen much?" He smiled sweetly.

"Ruined it, I'm afraid, sir," said Flint. "Can't you let us off till the end of the term?"

"Impossible. It will be a tight squeeze to Sandhurst this year."

"And all to be cut up by those vile Afghans, too," said Dawson. "'Wouldn't think there'd be so much competition, would you?"

"Oh, that reminds me. Crandall is coming down with the Old Boys—I've asked twenty of them, but we shan't get more than a weak team. I don't know whether he'll be much use, though. He was rather knocked about, recovering poor old Duncan's body."

"Crandall major—the Gunner?" Perowne asked.

"No, the minor—'Toffee' Crandall—in a native infantry regiment. He was almost before your time, Perowne."

"The papers didn't say anything about *him*. We read about Fat-Sow, of course. What's Crandall done, sir?"

"I've brought over an Indian paper that his mother sent me. It was rather a—hefty, I think you say—piece of work. Shall I read it?"

The Head knew how to read. When he had finished the quarter-column of close type everybody thanked him politely.

"Good for the old Coll.!" said Perowne. "Pity he wasn't in time to save Fat-Sow, though. That's nine to us, isn't it, in the last three years?"

"Yes. . . . And I took old Duncan off all games for extra-tu. five years ago this term," said the Head. "By the way, who do you hand over the games to, Flint?"

"Haven't thought yet. Who'd you recommend, sir?"

"No, thank you. I've heard it casually hinted behind my back that the Prooshian Bates is a downy bird, but he isn't going to make himself responsible for a new Head of the Games. Settle among yourselves. Good night."

"And that's the man," said Flint, when the door shut, "that you want to bother with a dame's-school row."

"I was only pullin' your fat leg," Perowne returned hastily. "You're so easy to draw, Flint."

"Well, never mind that. The Head's knocked the First Fifteen to bits, and we've got to pick up the pieces, or the Old Boys will have a walk over. Let's promote all the Second Fifteen and make Big Side play up. There's heaps of talent somewhere that we can polish up between now and the match."

The case was represented so urgently to the school that even Stalky and McTurk, who affected to despise football, played one big-side game seriously. They were forthwith promoted ere their ardour had time to cool, and the dignity of their Caps demanded that they should keep some show of virtue. The match-team was worked at least four days out of seven, and the school saw hope ahead.

With the last week of the term the Old Boys began to arrive, and their welcome was nicely proportioned to their worth. Gentlemen cadets from Sandhurst and Woolwich, who had only left a year ago but who carried

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enormous side, were greeted with a cheerful "Hullo! What's the Shop like?" from those who had shared their studies. Militia subalterns had more consideration, but it was understood they were not precisely of the true metal. Recreants who, failing for the Army, had gone into business or banks were received for old sake's sake, but in no way made too much of. But when the real subalterns, officers and gentlemen full-blown—who had been to the ends of the earth and back again and so carried no side—came on the scene strolling about with the Head, the school divided right and left in admiring silence. And when one laid hands on Flint, even upon the Head of the Games, crying, "Good Heavens! What do you mean by growing in this way? You were a beastly little fag when I left," visible haloes encircled Flint. They would walk to and fro in the corridor with the little red school-sergeant, telling news of old regiments; they would burst into form-rooms sniffing well-remembered smells of ink and whitewash; they would find nephews and cousins in the lower forms and present them with enormous wealth; or they would invade the gymnasium and make Foxy show off the new stock on the bars.

Chiefly, though, they talked with the Head, who was father-confessor and agent-general to them all; for what they shouted in their unthinking youth they proved in their thoughtless manhood—to wit, that the Prooshian Bates was "a downy bird." Young blood who had stumbled into an entanglement with a pastry-cook's daughter at Plymouth; experience who had come into a small legacy but mistrusted lawyers; ambition halting at cross-roads, anxious to take the one that would lead him farthest; extravagance pursued by the money-lender; arrogance in the thick of a regimental row—each carried his trouble to the Head; and Chiron showed him, in language quite unfit for little boys, a quiet and safe way round, out or under. So they overflowed his house, smoked his cigars, and drank his health as they had drunk it all the earth over when two or three of the old School had foregathered.

"Don't stop smoking for a minute," said the Head. "The more you're out of training the better for us. I've demoralised the First Fifteen with extra-tu."

"Ah, but we're a scratch lot. Have you told 'em we shall need a substitute even if Crandall can play?" said a Lieutenant of Engineers with a D.S.O. to his credit.

"He wrote me he'd play, so he can't have been much hurt. He's coming down to-morrow morning."

"Crandall minor that was, and brought off poor Duncan's body?" The Head nodded. "Where are you going to put him? We've turned you out of house and home already, Head Sahib." This was a Squadron-Commander of Bengal Lancers, home on leave.

"I'm afraid he'll have to go up to his old dormitory. You know Old Boys can claim that privilege. Yes, I think leetle Crandall minor must bed down there once more."

"Bates Sahib"—a Gunner flung a heavy arm round the Head's neck—"you've got something up your sleeve. Confess! I know that twinkle."

"Can't you see, you cuckoo?" a Submarine Miner interrupted. "Crandall goes up to the dormitory as an object-lesson, for moral effect and so forth. Isn't that true, Head Sahib?"

"It is. You know too much, Purvis. I licked you for that in '79."

"You did, sir, and it's my private belief you chalked the cane."

"N-no. But I've a very straight eye. Perhaps that misled you."

That opened the floodgates of fresh memories, and they all told tales out of school.

When Crandall minor that was—Lieutenant R. Crandall of an ordinary native corps—arrived from Exeter on the morning of the match he was cheered along the whole front of College, for the prefects had repeated the sense of that which the Head had read them in Flint's study. When Prout's house understood that he would claim his Old Boy's right to a bed for one night, Beetle ran into King's next door and executed a public "gloat" up and down the enemy's big form-room, departing in a haze of ink-pots.

"What d'you take any notice of these rotters for?" said Stalky, playing substitute for the Old Boys, magnificent in black jersey, white knickers, and black stockings. "I talked to *him* up in the dormitory when he was changin'. 'Pulled his sweater down for him. He's cut about all over the arms—horrid purply ones. He's goin' to tell us about it to-night. I asked him to when I was lacin' his boots."

"Well, you *have* got cheek," said Beetle enviously.

"Slipped out before I thought. But he wasn't a bit angry. He's no end of a chap.

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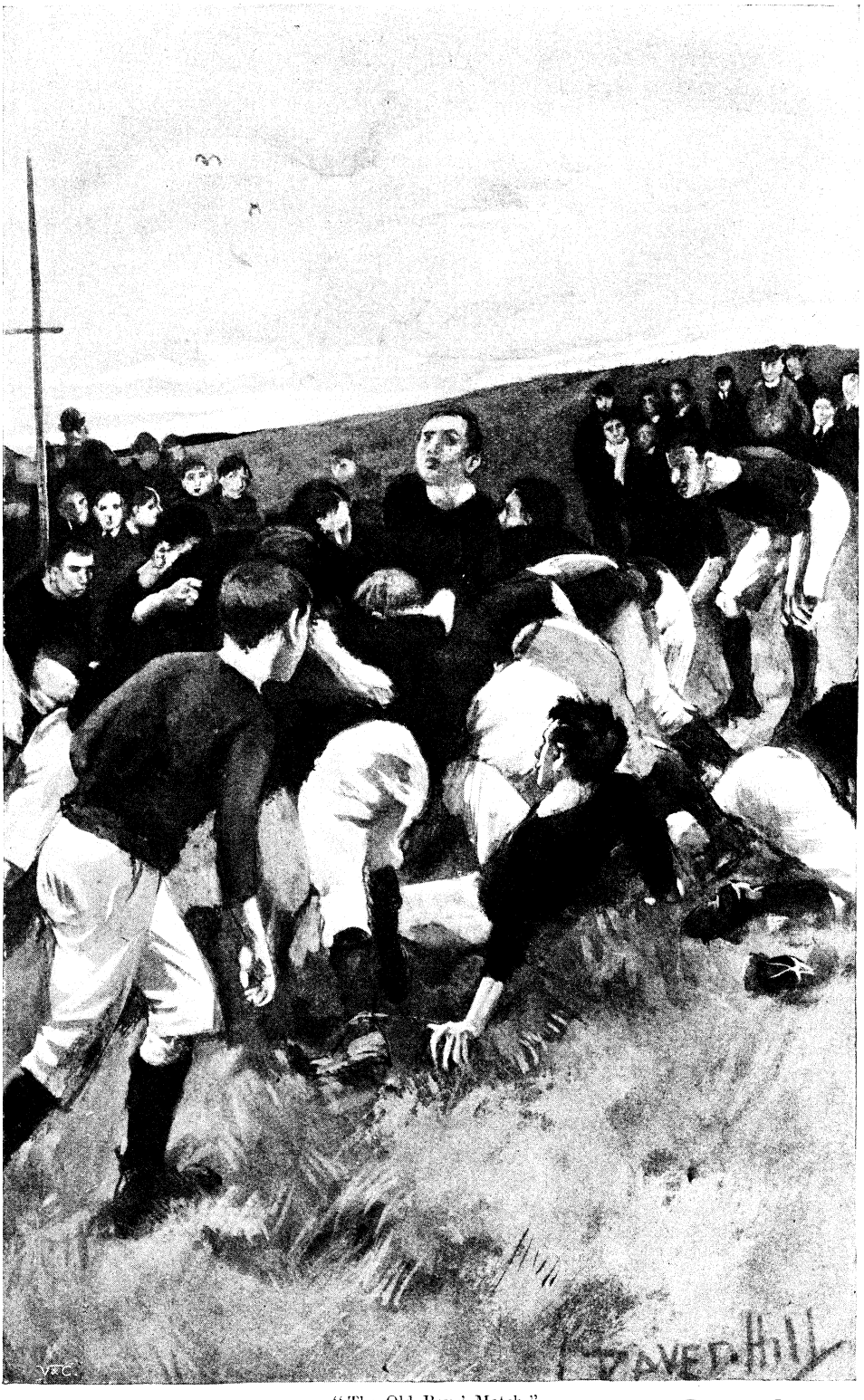

"The Old Boys' Match."

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I swear I'm goin' to play up like beans. Tell Turkey!"

The technique of that match belongs to a bygone age. Scrimmages were tight and enduring; hacking was direct and to the purpose; and around the scrimmage stood the School, crying, "Put down your heads and shove!" Toward the end everybody lost all sense of decency, and mothers of day-boys too close to the touch-line heard language not included in the bills. No one was actually carried off the field, but both sides felt happier when time was called, and Beetle helped Stalky and McTurk into their overcoats. The two had met in the many-legged heart of things, and as Stalky said had "done each other proud." As they swaggered woodenly behind the teams—substitutes do not rank as equals of hairy men—they passed a pony-carriage near the wall, and a husky voice cried, "Well played. Oh, played indeed." It was Stettson major, white-cheeked and hollow-eyed, who had fought his way to the ground under escort of an impatient coachman.

"Hullo, Stettson," said Stalky, checking. "Is it safe to come near you yet?"

"Oh, yes. I'm all right. They wouldn't let me out before, but I had to come to the match. Your mouth looks pretty plummy."

"Turkey trod on it accidental-done-a-purpose. Well, I'm glad you're better, because we owe you something. You and your membranes got us into a sweet mess, young man."

"I heard of that," said the boy, giggling. "The Head told me."

"Dooce he did! When?"

"Oh, come on up to Coll. My shin'll stiffen if we stay jawin' here."

"Shut up, Turkey. I want to find out about this. Well?"

"He was stayin' at our house all the time I was ill."

"What for? Neglectin' the Coll. that way? 'Thought he was in town."

"I was off my head, you know, and they said I kept on callin' for him."

"Cheek! You're only a day-boy."

"He came just the same, and he about saved my life. I was all bunged up one night—just goin' to croak, the doctor said—and they stuck a tube or somethin' in my throat, and the Head sucked out the stuff."

"Ugh! 'Shot if *I* would!"

"He ought to have got diphtheria himself, the doctor said. So he stayed on at our house instead of going back. I'd ha' croaked in another twenty minutes, the doctor says."

Here the coachman, being under orders, whipped up and nearly ran over the three.

"My Hat!" said Beetle. "That's pretty average heroic."

"Pretty average!" McTurk's knee in the small of his back cannoned him into Stalky, who punted him back. "*You* ought to be hung!"

"And the Head ought to get the V.C.," said Stalky. "Why, he might have been dead *and* buried by now. But he wasn't. But he didn't. Ho! ho! He just nipped through the hedge like a lusty old blackbird. Extra-special, five hundred lines, an' gated for a week—all sereno."

"I read o' somethin' like that in a book," said Beetle. "Gummy, what a chap! Just think of it!"

"I'm thinking," said McTurk; and he delivered a wild Irish yell that made the team turn round.

"Shut your fat mouth," said Stalky, dancing with impatience. "Leave it to your Uncle Stalky, and he'll have the Head on toast. If you say a word, Beetle, till I give you leave, I swear I'll slay you. *Habeo Capitem crinibus minimis.* I've got him by the short hairs! Now look as if nothing had happened."

There was no need of guile. The School was too busy cheering the drawn match. It hung round the lavatories regardless of muddy boots while the team washed. It cheered Crandall minor whenever it caught sight of him, and it cheered more wildly than ever after prayers, because the Old Boys in evening dress, visibly twirling their moustaches, attended, and instead of standing with the masters, ranged themselves along the wall immediately before the prefects; and the Head called them over, too—majors, minors and tertiuses, after their old names.

"Yes, it's all very fine," he said to his guests after dinner, "but the boys are getting a little out of hand. There will be trouble and sorrow later, I'm afraid. You'd better turn in early, Crandall. The dormitory will be sitting up for you. I don't know to what dizzy heights you may climb in your profession, but I do know you'll never get such absolute adoration as you're getting now."

"Confound the adoration. I want to finish my cigar, sir."

"It's all pure gold. Go where glory waits, Crandall—minor."

The setting of that apotheosis was a ten-bed attic dormitory, communicating through doorless openings with three others. The gas flickered over the raw-pine washstands. There was an incessant whistling of draughts,

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and outside the blindless windows the sea beat on the Pebble Ridge.

"Same old bed—same old mattress, I believe," said Crandall, yawning. "Same old everything. Oh, but I'm lame! I'd no notion you chaps could play like this." He caressed a battered shin. "You've given us all something to remember you by."

It needed a few minutes to put them at their ease; and, in some way they could not understand, they were more easy when Crandall turned round and said his prayers—a ceremony he had neglected for some years.

"Oh, I *am* sorry. I've forgotten to put out the gas."

"Please don't bother," said the prefect of the dormitory. "Worthington does that."

A nightgowned twelve-year-old, who had been waiting to show off, leaped from his bed to the bracket and back again by way of a washstand.

"How d'you manage when he's asleep?" said Crandall, chuckling.

"Shove a cold cleek down his neck."

"It was a wet sponge when *I* was junior in the dormitory. . . . Hullo! What's happening?"

The darkness had filled with whispers, the sound of trailing rugs, bare feet on bare boards, protests, giggles and threats such as—

"Be quiet, you ass! . . . Squattez-vous on the floor, then! . . . I swear you aren't going to sit on *my* bed! . . . Mind the tooth-glass," etc.

"Sta—Corkran said," the prefect began, his tone showing his sense of Stalky's insolence, "that perhaps you'd tell us about that business with Duncan's body."

"Yes—yes—yes," ran the keen whispers. "Tell us."

"There's nothing to tell. What on earth are you chaps hoppin' about in the cold for?"

"Never mind us," said the voices. "Tell about Fat-Sow."

So Crandall turned on his pillow and spoke to the generation he could not see.

"Well, about three months ago he was commanding a treasure-guard—a cart full of rupees to pay troops with—five thousand rupees in silver. He was comin' to a place called Fort Pearson, near Kalabagh."

"I was born there," squeaked a small fag. "It was called after my uncle."

"Shut up—you and your uncle! Never mind *him*, Crandall."

"Well, ne'er mind. The Afridis found out that this treasure was on the move, and they ambushed the whole show a couple of miles before he got to the fort, and cut up the escort. Duncan was wounded and the escort hooked it. There weren't more than twenty Sepoys, all told, and there were any amount of Afridis. As things turned out, I was in charge at Fort Pearson. 'Fact was, I'd heard the firing and was just going to see about it, when Duncan's men came up. So we all turned back together. They told me something about an officer, but I couldn't get the hang of things till I saw a chap under the wheels of the cart out in the open, propped up on one arm, blazing away with a revolver. You see, the escort had abandoned the cart, and the Afridis — they're an awfully suspicious gang—thought the retreat was a trap—sort of draw, you know--and the cart was the bait. So they had left poor old Duncan alone. 'Minute they spotted how few *we* were, it was a race across the flat who should reach old Duncan first. We ran, and they ran, and we won, and after a little hackin' about they pulled off. I never knew it was one of us till I was right on top of him. There are heaps of Duncans in the service, and of course the name didn't remind me. He wasn't changed at all hardly. He'd been shot through the lungs, poor old man, and he was pretty thirsty. I gave him a drink and sat down beside him, and—funny thing, too—he said, 'Hullo, Toffee!' and I said, 'Hullo, Fat-Sow! hope you aren't hurt,' or something of the kind. But he died in a minute or two—never lifted his head off my knees. . . . I say, you chaps out there will get your death of cold. 'Better go to bed."

"All right. In a minute. But your cuts — your cuts. How did you get wounded?"

"That was when we were taking the body back to the Fort. They came on again, and there was a bit of a scrimmage."

"Did you kill anyone?"

"Yes. Shouldn't wonder. Good night."

"Good night. Thank you, Crandall. Thanks awf'ly, Crandall. Good night."

The unseen crowds withdrew. His own dormitory rustled into bed and lay silent for a while.

"I say, Crandall"—Stalky's voice was tuned to a wholly foreign reverence.

"Well, what?"

"Suppose a chap found another chap croaking with diphtheria—all bunged up with it—and they stuck a tube in his throat and the chap sucked the stuff out, what would you say?"

"Um," said Crandall reflectively, "I've

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"'Propped up on one arm, blazing away with a revolver.'"

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only heard of one case, and that was a doctor. He did it for a woman."

"Oh, this wasn't a woman. It was just a boy."

"Makes it all the finer, then. It's about the bravest thing a man could do. Why?"

"Oh, I heard of a chap doin' it. That's all."

"Then he's a brave man."

"Would *you* funk it?"

"Ra-ther. Anybody would. Fancy dying of diphtheria in cold blood."

"Well—ah! Er! Look here!" The sentence ended in a grunt, for Stalky had leaped out of bed and with McTurk was sitting on the head of Beetle, who would have sprung the mine there and then.

Next day, which was the last of the term and given up to a few wholly unimportant examinations, began with wrath and war. Mr. King had discovered that nearly all his house—it lay, as you know, next door but one to Prout's in the long range of buildings—had unlocked the doors between the dormitories and had gone in to listen to a story told by Crandall. He went to the Head, clamorous, injured, appealing; for he never approved of allowing so-called young men of the world to contaminate the morals of boyhood. Very good, said the Head. He would attend to it.

"Well, I'm awf'ly sorry," said Crandall guiltily. "I don't think I told 'em anything they oughtn't to hear. Don't let them get into trouble on my account."

"Tck!" the Head answered, with the ghost of a wink. "It isn't the boys that make trouble; it's the masters. However. Prout and King don't approve of dormitory gatherings on this scale, and one must back up the house-masters. Moreover, it's hopeless to punish two houses only, so late in the term. We must be fair and include everybody. Let's see. They have a holiday task for the Easters, which, of course, none of them will ever look at. We will give the whole school, except prefects and study boys, regular prep. to-night; and the Common-room will have to supply a master to take it. We must be fair to all."

"Prep. on the last night of the term? Whew!" said Crandall, thinking of his own wild youth. "I fancy there will be larks."

The school, frolicking among packed trunks, whooping down the corridor and "gloating" in form-rooms, received the news with amazement and rage. No school in the world did prep. on the last night of the term. This thing was monstrous, tyrannical, subversive of law, religion, and morality. They would go into the form-rooms, and they would take their degraded holiday task with them, but—here they smiled and speculated what manner of man the Common-room would send up against them. The lot fell on Mason, new, credulous and enthusiastic, who loved youth. No other master was anxious to take that "prep.," for the school lacked the steadying influence of tradition; and men accustomed to the ordered routine of ancient foundations found it occasionally insubordinate. The four long form-rooms, in which all below the rank of study-boys worked, received him with thunders of applause. Ere he had coughed twice they favoured him with a metrical summary of the marriage-laws of Great Britain, as recorded by the High Priest of the Israelites and commented on by the leader of the host. The lower forms reminded him that it was the last day, and that therefore he must "take it all in play." When he dashed off to rebuke them, the Lower Fourth and Upper Third began with one accord to be sick, loudly and realistically. Mr. Mason tried, of all vain things under heaven, to argue with them, and a bold soul at a back desk bade him "take fifty lines for not 'olding up 'is 'and before speaking." As one who prided himself upon the precision of his English this cut Mason to the quick, and while he was trying to discover the offender, the Upper and Lower Second, three form-rooms away, turned out the gas and threw inkpots. It was a pleasant and stimulating "prep." The study-boys and prefects heard the echoes of it far off, and the Common-room at dessert smiled.

Stalky waited, watch in hand, till half-past eight.

"If it goes on much longer the Head will come up," said he. "We'll tell the studies first, and then the form-rooms. Look sharp!"

He allowed no time for Beetle to be dramatic or McTurk to drawl. They poured into study after study, told their tale and went again so soon as they saw they were understood, waiting for no comment; while the noise of that unholy "prep." grew and deepened. By the door of Flint's study they met Mason flying towards the corridor.

"Gone to fetch the Head. Hurry up! Come on!"

They broke into Number Twelve form-room abreast and panting.

"The Head! The Head! The Head!" That call stilled the tumult for a minute,

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and Stalky leaping to a desk shouted, "He went and sucked the diphtheria stuff out of Stettson major's throat when we thought he was in town. Stop rotting, you asses! Stettson major would have croaked if the Head hadn't done it. The Head might have died himself. Crandall says it's the bravest thing any livin' man can do, and"—his voice cracked—"the Head don't know we know!"

McTurk and Beetle, jumping from desk to desk, drove the news home among the junior forms. There was a pause, and then, Mason behind him, the Head entered. It was in the established order of things that no boy should speak or move under his eye. He expected the hush of awe. He was received with cheers—steady, ceaseless cheering. Being a wise man he went away, and the forms were silent and a little frightened.

"It's all right," said Stalky. "He can't do much. 'Tisn't as if you'd pulled the desks up like we did when old Carleton took prep. once. There's no damage except to Mason's feelin's. Keep it up! Hear 'em cheering in the studies!" He rocketed out with a yell, to find Flint and the prefects lifting the roof off the corridor.

When the Head of a limited liability company paying four per cent. is cheered on his saintly way to prayers, not only by four form-rooms of boys waiting punishment, but by heads of games and prefects, he can either ask for an explanation or go his road with dignity, while the senior house-master glares like an excited cat and points out to a white and trembling mathematical master that certain methods—not his, thank Heaven!—usually produce certain results. Out of delicacy the Old Boys did not attend that call-over; and it was to the school drawn up in the gymnasium that the Head spoke icily.

"It is not often that I do not understand you; but I confess I do not to-night. Some of you, after your idiotic performances at prep., seem to think me a fit person to cheer. I am going to show you that I am not."

Crash — crash — crash came the triple cheer that disproved it, and the Head lowered under the gas.

"That is enough. You will gain nothing. The little boys (the Lower School did not like that form of address) will do me three hundred lines apiece in the holidays. I shall take no further notice of them. The Upper School will do me one thousand lines apiece in the holidays, to be shown up the evening of the day they come back. And further——"

"Gummy, what a glutton!" Stalky whispered.

"For your behaviour towards Mr. Mason I intend to lick the whole of the Upper School to-morrow when I give you your journey-money. This will include the three study-boys I found dancing on the form-room desks when I came up. Prefects will stay after call-over."

The school filed out in silence, but gathered in groups by the gymnasium door waiting what might befall.

"And now, Flint," said the Head, "will you be good enough to give me some explanation of your conduct?"

"Well, sir," said Flint desperately, "if you save a chap's life at the risk of your own when he's dying of diphtheria, and the Coll. finds it out, wha-what *can* you expect, sir?"

"Um, I see. Then that noise was not meant for—ah, cheek. I can connive at immorality, but I cannot stand impudence. However, it does not excuse their insolence to Mr. Mason. I'll forego the lines this once, remember; but the lickings hold good."

When this news was made public, the school, lost in wonder and admiration, gasped at the Head as he went to his house. Here was a man to be reverenced. On the rare occasions when he caned he did it very scientifically, and the execution of a hundred boys would be epic—immense.

"It's all right, Head Sahib. *We* know," said Crandall, as the Head slipped off his gown with a grunt in his smoking-room. "I found out just now from our substitute. He was gettin' my opinion on your performance last night in the dormitory. I didn't know it was *you* he was talkin' about. Crafty young animal. Freckled chap with eyes—Corkran, I think his name is."

"Oh, I know *him*, thank you," said the Head, and reflectively: "Ye-es, I should have included them even if I hadn't seen 'em."

"If the old Coll. weren't a little above themselves already, we'd chair you down the corridor," said the Engineer. "Oh, Bates, how *could* you? You might have caught it yourself, and where would we have been then?"

"I always knew you were worth twenty of us any day. Now I'm sure of it," said the Squadron Commander, looking round for contradictions.

"He isn't fit to manage a school, though. Promise you'll never do it again, Bates Sahib. We—we can't go away comfy in our minds if you take these risks," said the Gunner.

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"Bates Sahib, you aren't ever goin' to cane the whole Upper School, are you?" said Crandall.

"I can connive at immorality, as I said, but I can't stand impudence. Mason's lot is quite hard enough even when I back him. Besides, the men in the golf-club heard them singing 'Aaron and Moses.' I shall have complaints about that from the parents of day-boys. Decency must be preserved."

—this mornin'. We got the cream of it," said Stalky. "Now wait till a few chaps come out, and we'll really cheer him."

"Don't wait on our account, please," said Crandall, speaking for the Old Boys. "We're going to begin now."

It was very well so long as the cheering was confined to the corridor, but when it spread to the gymnasium, when the boys awaiting their turn cheered, the Head gave

"'Now, all together.'"

"We're coming to help," said all the guests.

The Upper School were caned one after the other, their overcoats over their arms, the brakes waiting in the road below to take them to the station, their journey-money on the table. The Head began with Stalky, McTurk, and Beetle. He dealt faithfully with them.

"And here's your journey-money. Good-bye, and pleasant holidays."

"Good-bye. Thank you, sir. Good-bye."

They shook hands.

"Desire don't outrun performance—*much* it up in despair, and the remnant flung themselves upon him to shake hands.

Then they seriously devoted themselves to cheering till the brakes were hustled off the premises in dumb-show.

"Didn't I say I'd get even with him?" said Stalky, on the box-seat, as they swung into the narrow Northam street. "Now, all together, takin' time from your Uncle Stalky:

"It's a way we have in the Army,
It's a way we have in the Navy,
It's a way we have at the Public Schools,
Which nobody can deny!"

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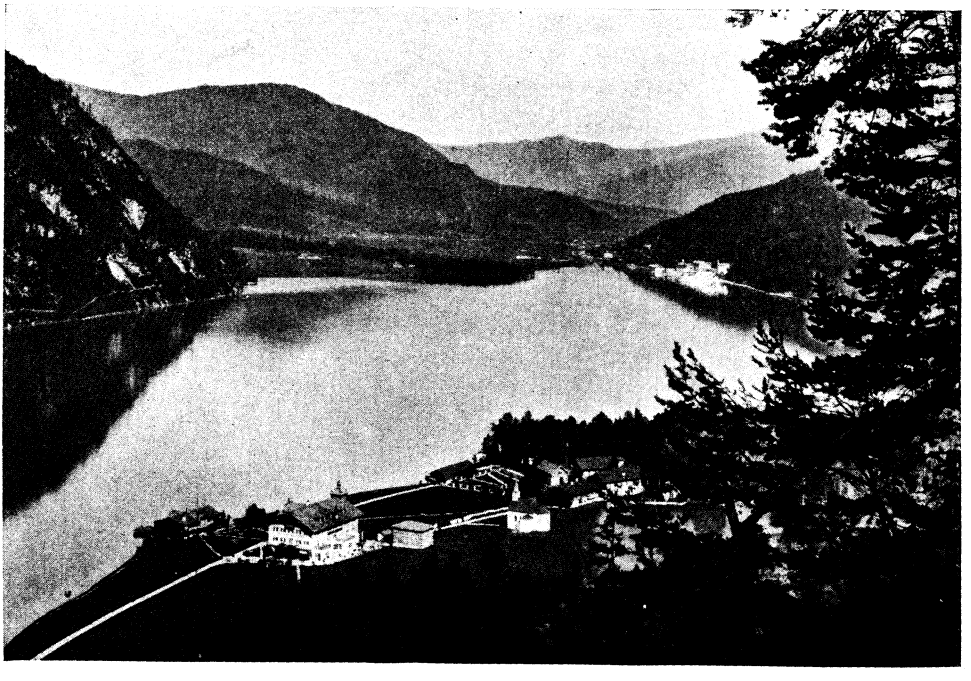
THE GREAT CHAMOIS PRESERVE OF THE DUKE OF SAXE-COBURG-GOTHA.

By A. de Burgh.

THE various articles which have lately appeared in the public press concerning the Duke and Duchess of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, better known in England as the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, have given much interesting information about Duchies which, although small, are of great importance to the German Empire, and have described in detail the various palaces and castles the Duke inherited from his uncle, the late Duke Ernest the Second, but no mention has been made of the large domain which the reigning Duke possesses outside his own realm. This estate is really most interesting, especially on account of its forming the largest preserve of that nimble inhabitant of the Alps, the chamois.

Perhaps no reigning family in the world is more renowned than the Saxe-Coburgs and their ancestors on account of its members having been lovers of the chase. Duke Casimir of Coburg (1564 to 1633) wrote a hunting book of which, unfortunately, only two copies are known to exist, one being preserved in the Festung (fortress) which overlooks the town of Coburg, and which has now been turned into a museum, and the other in the possession of the well-known sportsman Count Hans Wilczek, of Vienna. The illustrations of this rare work, which clearly paint the customs of the time, were executed by the Duke's Court painter Wolff Pirkner, a native of Bayreuth. Duke Casimir was amongst the rulers of his time the most intrepid huntsman and the keenest sportsman, having no doubt imbibed his love for the chase from his guardian and father-in-law, the Elector of Saxony. The annals of that date report many extraordinary deeds of prowess and intrepidity, and it is told of the Emperor Maximilian, Count Gaston de Foix, and others, that they used to tackle bears without hounds and with a spear only.



THE CHAMOIS PRESERVE FRINGES THE LAKE OF ACHEN, AND THE VILLAGE IS THE TERMINUS OF THE ROAD FROM THE CASTLE.

Naturally the invention of gunpowder

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caused a revolution in the chase, and there is no doubt that the golden age of that sport came to an end with the death of the Emperor Maximilian in 1519, for the invention and gradual perfection of firearms eliminated slowly but steadily the element of danger which was hitherto due to the primitive arms generally in use. The more universally gunpowder was adopted for sporting purposes the less became success a matter of courage and strength, and one cannot be far wrong in maintaining that the innovation affected the chase quite as much as it did warfare. It is remarkable how strongly the use of powder was opposed by the nobles and highest classes of the time, and it was actually a hundred years before it was accepted by hunters, only the lower classes using firearms at the early stages of its invention. The Emperor Maximilian says of himself that he could shoot farther and with greater accuracy with his cross-bow than his keeper could with the "fire-tube."

THE LATE DUKE ERNEST OF SAXE-COBURG-GOTHA.
Photo by J. Bieber, Berlin.

THE PRESENT DUKE OF SAXE-COBURG-GOTHA.
Photo by Uhlenhuth, Coburg.

Duke Casimir was the first of his line to use rifles. Numerous examples of the richly inlaid, terribly cumbersome and heavy wheel-lock rifles can be seen in the armoury in the Castle of Coburg and at the rifle collection at Dresden.

From this mighty and passionate hunter, Casimir, German princes in general inherited the love of sport, and many are the examples we have before us of royal sportsmen of our own time, and it is well known that Coburg blood runs in the veins of almost every reigning family of Europe. How much do we hear of the prowess of the Kaiser with his rifle at Rominten, of King Humbert's big bags on the Alps, and of the Emperor of Austria's and King of Saxony's success in bringing down the chamois on the Styrian steeps! The head of game shot by the Emperors of Germany and Austria

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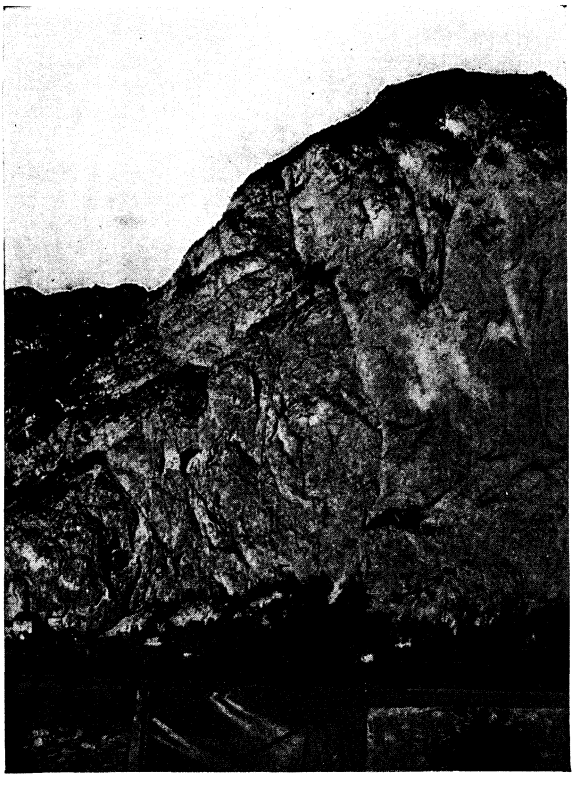
amount to thousands, but their totals sink into utter insignificance beside those of, for instance, the Elector of Saxony, who between the years 1611 and 1656 killed with knife and gun one hundred and ten thousand head of game. This is a prodigious total, considering the comparative inefficiency of firearms at that date, and the fact that his record shows that he took no account of the small game.

However, there exists still a sport with a strong element of danger, a sport which at



MARTIN'S WAND, WHERE THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN NEARLY LOST HIS LIFE.

the present time is indulged in by only few, and, what is more remarkable still, is indulged in principally by two of the oldest occupants of thrones—namely, the Emperor of Austria and the King of Saxony. This is the chamois chase, the practice of stalking the most nimble, quick, clever and cautious denizen of the mountain vastnesses of the Tyrol, Styria, and Switzerland. In this sport the late Duke Ernest of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha was the third in a trio of intrepid royal mountaineers and chamois hunters.

The chamois is a most difficult animal to stalk. When grazing upon the few patches of green to be found among the rocky heights of the Alps, a herd is always surrounded by sentinels which keep up the closest observation of the neighbourhood, and at the approach of danger give a signal. Immediately the herd disappears in the crags and caves of the vastness. Their scent is extraordinary, and it is only possible to get near them by creeping against the wind; they are only found at a height of 5,000 feet, and invariably select for their place of pasture spots most difficult and dangerous to reach.

One of the most renowned chamois hunters of the past was the Emperor Maximilian, of whom we have already made mention. His intrepidity and love for the chase once nearly cost him his life. We reproduce here a celebrated mountain precipice called the Martin's Wand (wall), where the Emperor, whilst stalking a chamois, slipped, and was only saved from a terrible fate by a rock which stood out from the side of the steep wall. The legend has it that he was rescued thence by an unknown mountaineer, who suddenly appeared and carried him down from his desperate position. When Maximilian wished to reward him his benefactor had gone, and the folklore attributes the deed to a miracle, the action of an angel in the guise of a Tyrolese. A large cross now marks the spot where this occurrence took place nearly 400 years ago. It might be interesting on this occasion to mention a tale told by the Emperor Maximilian himself. He says that when his keeper maintained it was impossible for him to shoot with one of the first sporting firearms a chamois which was about 200 fathoms off, the animal was pierced at the first attempt by his bolt.

The late Duke Ernest acquired a large and splendid estate in the Northern Tyrol and built a castle or shooting-box almost in the centre of this vast domain. The castle bears the name of the district—Castle of Hinterriss. The preserves contain over 10,000 chamois, and Duke Ernest never went a year without indulging in his favourite sport. During his lifetime he was frequently accompanied by his nephew, the then Duke of Edinburgh, and the Prince of Wales, we believe, has also visited the beautiful, romantic place, situated not far from the Lake of Achen, of

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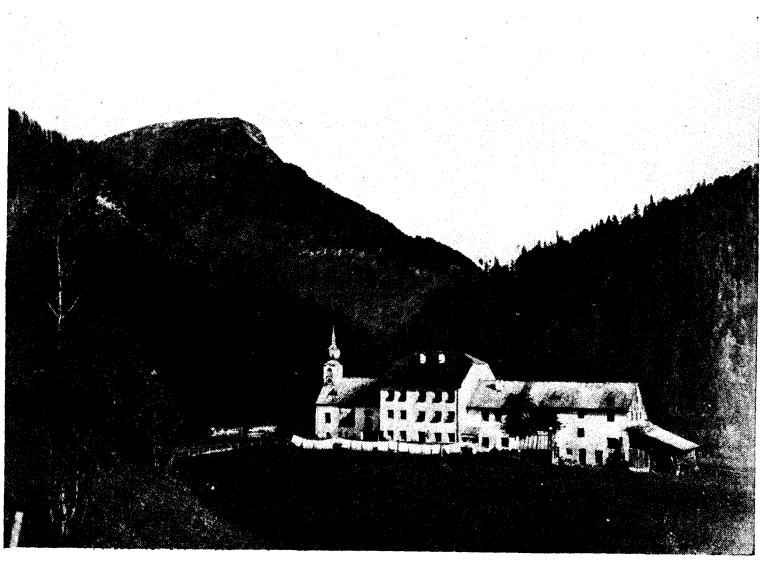
which we give a photograph. We also reproduce views of the village and church of Hinterriss and of the castle itself.

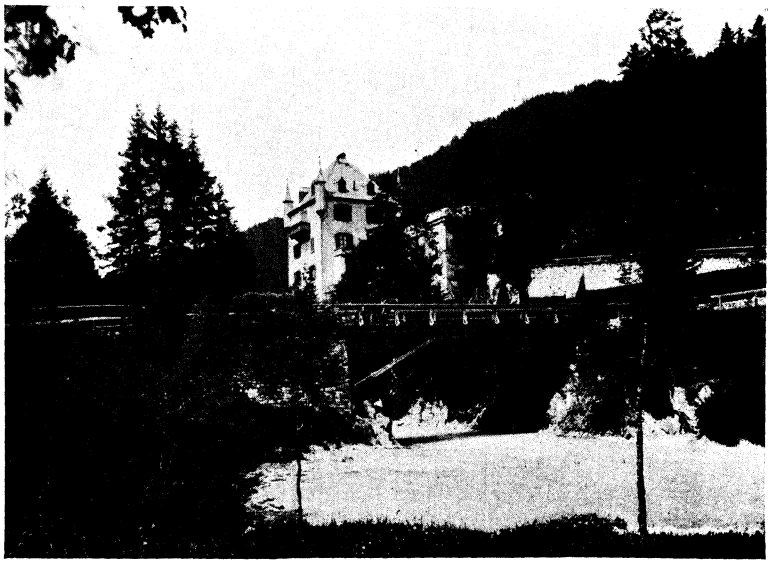
Since the present Duke inherited the property he has entertained various friends at his box, and it was only last year that Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein spent some weeks at the castle with his brother-in-law.



CHURCH, INN, AND VILLAGE OF HINTERRISS.

The Castle of Hinterriss is a building irregular in shape, of light grey stone, castellated and surmounted with small turrets. It lies in a long and narrow valley, and is approached by a drive through a pretty garden. In the distance are the mountain peaks, crested here and there with never-melting snows, and their lower slopes covered with pine forests and meadows rich with the beautiful and varied flora of Alpine regions.

The decorations of the interior are extremely simple. The halls are ornamented with heads of chamois and other trophies of the chase, while there is also a fine collection of various kinds of rifles, guns, hunting knives, and alpenstocks. The late Duke generally used to go accompanied only by a gentleman-in-waiting. Dressed in the native costume of a mountaineer, his rifle slung across his shoulder, and carrying a stout stick, he would start at sunrise to climb the craggy peaks, not returning till late in the evening. Some of the paths which he had to follow in the course of these expeditions were very narrow and bordered by precipices many hundred feet deep, and it is remarkable that a man of his age and size should have found no difficulty in threading his way along these treacherous mountain tracks. The Duke of Edinburgh was not unfrequently the guest of his uncle and accompanied him in these perilous excursions.



THE HINTERRISS SHOOTING-BOX BUILT BY THE LATE DUKE ERNEST.

In connection with these expeditions an amusing anecdote is told. On one occasion, while sailing down

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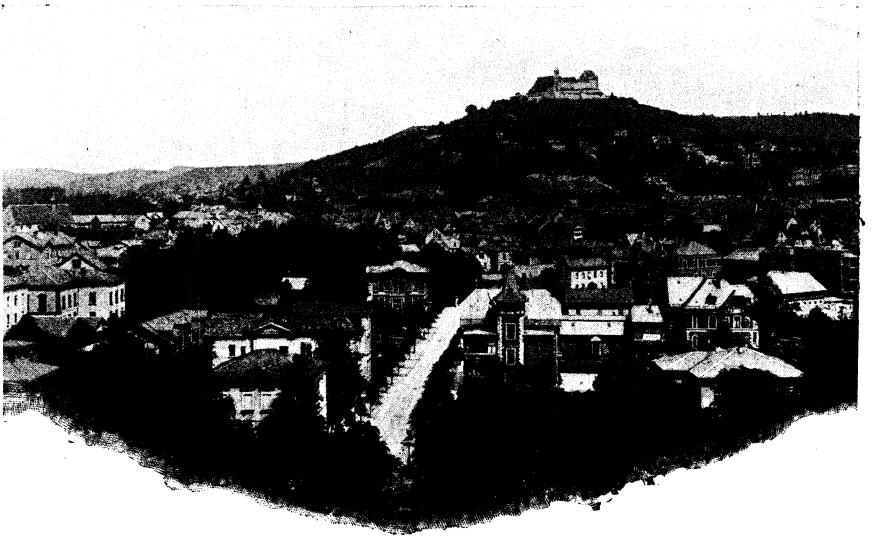
the lake accompanied by two guests, Duke Ernest called attention to paths hewn in the mountain side which appeared at their high elevation almost too narrow for the foot of a human being to tread. In the course of conversation he remarked to one of his friends that he hoped on the following day to show them the lake from those very paths. Shortly after reaching the castle, however, the guests, with a curious unanimity, found awaiting them letters which recalled them immediately to their homes. The Duke, although expressing his regret at their speedy departure, was not long in tracing the cause, and showed considerable amusement—perhaps not unmingled with a little contempt—when he became aware of their unwillingness to join in the prospective excursion.

Hinterriss can be reached either from the north, taking the train from Munich to Tegernsee, and then *via* Bad Kreuth to Achensee, or else from the south, coming from the Valley of the Inn by a mountain railway from Jenbach up to the same lake. A carriage road from the lake to the castle, constructed by the late Duke, leads through some of the most picturesque and wild scenery of the Alps, and, from the fact that it takes about five hours to travel the distance, some idea can be formed of the great extent of the property, as the whole journey is made upon the Duke's domain.

The late Duke was extremely popular with his neighbours on account of his good nature and kind-heartedness. It is even stated that he was so lenient to poachers that more than once he interfered in their favour when brought to justice; and upon some occasions, where the offenders had a family and were poor, actually permitted them to keep their stolen booty.

Although the present Duke is not so well known as his predecessor, he has nevertheless made himself much beloved, and is looked upon by his retainers and tenants as a worthy follower of his sportsmanlike uncle. The death of his only son is a source of very great grief to all who have ever come in contact with either the reigning Duke or the late heir-apparent, who was particularly distinguished by great amiability and affability. It is hoped in the neighbourhood of Hinterriss that in future the Duke of Connaught, who has now become the next heir to the Duchies, and is well known, not only as a thorough soldier, but also as a keen sportsman, may from time to time visit the Castle and partake in the sport of stalking the chamois. Her Majesty's sons are considered in this region in every respect perfect "Coburgers," the highest compliment the people can pay them.



THE TOWN AND CASTLE OF COBURG.

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"An April Shower."

By Edward Read.

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ONE SHALL BE TAKEN.

By Mayne Lindsay.

Illustrated by Florence Reason.

THEY went to town daily in the same train for some weeks, and so fell into friendship. There were other travellers, of course, who poured into the carriages, morning after morning, from the suburban stations; lean clerks and portly city fathers; governesses and other neutral-tinted women; young and old, eager and apathetic; a living stream of mediocrities. He knew them all well by sight, and could possibly have opened conversation with anyone he pleased had the inclination seized him. But it did not seize him, and there was only in its place a feeling of revolt against the unlovely crowd; a throb of longing for something to feed the capricious artistic appetite; a shade of delicate repulsion with which even to see them filled him. And then it happened that there looked at him, suddenly, one morning, from the other side of the carriage, a pair of eyes that startled him into friendly interest, for the keynote of their pathos was the dominant one of his own life. The girl was white-faced and ill-dressed, insignificant in face and figure; but shut in behind the barrier he felt, rather than recognised, a prisoned kindred instinct. So they drew together naturally, and drifted on from commonplaces to interchange of experiences and histories, till they knew each other as well as if they had been lifetime friends. And all this without an attempt to penetrate further into each other's acquaintance than was afforded by the daily half-hour in the crowded train. It was another kindred sense that told them, perhaps, how easily violent transplanting may wither a friendship that has been brought about by a peculiar isolation.

Her story was a common one. She was one of a large family that struggled to exist on a small income in some drab-coloured suburban street, and she was not wholly sorry that her lines had fallen in the London office rather than in the overcrowded home, where there were always family jars, and shabbiness, and noise, and where the little worries and the little cares trod incessantly upon each other's heels. She did not say that she was habitually underfed, because a hungry brood of brothers and sisters clamoured for feeding that her own overworked constitution could not thrive upon, or that the unrest that was in the little house worked with the strain of office routine to sap her strength and courage. He learned that from the bloodless cheeks and restless, nervous fingers, and from the ominous cough that so often interrupted their conversation.

His life was less simple to explain. His father had been a dreamer of dreams, an unrecognised poet, to whose paradoxical mind a world of fantasy had been the only reality of life, and who had married and begotten a son, and died, without really paying much attention to the incident. To his son he had left the heritage of his sensitive poet nature, with the pinch of poverty that made him an office drudge, cramped by the narrow confines of a life he hated—as helpless a butterfly as ever a hard world broke upon the wheel.

"I have been at it eight years," he said, in answer to her question, "and I hate it more now than the day when I began. It is not the work itself—that is a discipline, and almost a relief—but it is the sordid life, the cruelty of the London streets, the jostling crowds that daze and choke and bewilder me. No rest—no colour—no relief."

She nodded eagerly. Did she not know? Had she not always that sick craving for peace, and for comfort—the desire that makes a wounded animal drag itself away to some deserted corner? The bustling crowds hurt her, too, though perhaps, had she been able to analyse the feeling, she might have found the repulsion less mental than physical. But that was a shade that passed unnoticed; it sufficed that they both suffered from the same external cause.

"I feel it, too," she said. "If I could only get away to some place where there

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were less people, and more sunshine and trees, some place where one could sit still and be warm, and look at the sky, or hear the sea breaking at night, I believe I could be happy."

His eyes sparkled.

"I could be more than happy," he said, and leaned forward so that she might hear him as he dropped his voice, as a man who speaks of sacred things. "I know I have the power in me—here. I cannot seize it in this dreadful city; it comes and it is gone; but away—*there*—it would stay, and I should write instead of only feeling dumbly, as I do now. I shut my eyes sometimes and dream about the South, where everything is bright and open, and the air smells with a strange, sweet odour that is like meat and drink to a man, and the flood of thought comes rushing up, and I am a poet—a king—for the time. But then the city crowds upon me again, and it is gone."

It was a strange conversation, and the two young creatures felt it; for they sat still for a minute or two after that and looked silently at each other. The girl waited, and presently he went on.

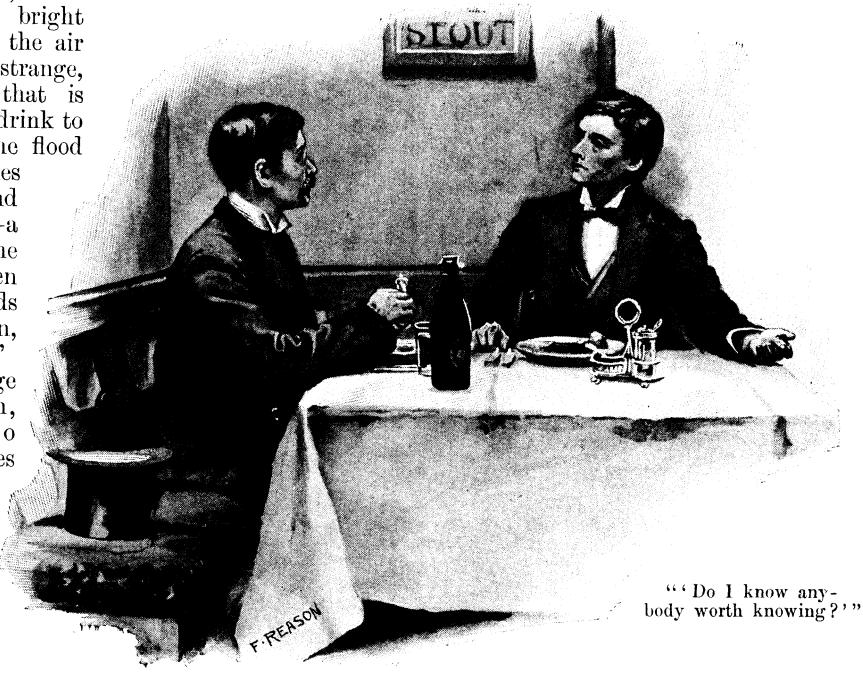
"I get up in the winter nights, when the bricks and mortar freeze me," he said, "and I look out at the stars and picture it to myself. The power is very near to the surface then—it comes sometimes—and I know what I could be if I were out of this cursed London. And, oh! how I hunger and thirst—how I faint—for the colour of the South—freedom—happiness—life! It is all that to me."

The girl broke into a fit of coughing. The paroxysm shook her lean body as if it would rack it to pieces; she gasped for breath and clutched the edge of the seat as she rocked backwards and forwards. He looked at her with helpless sympathy until the cough had rasped itself out and she could speak again.

"You put it so beautifully," she said, with *naïve* flattery. "It is easy to see you are a poet. Ah, yes, you are clever and you are a man; you will go there some day, and feel the wonderful sunshine all about you. But I am only a stupid girl, and I shall never get the chance—never. Yet I want it. I am hungry, too. And I am cold—so cold—in these bitter winds."

She shivered as she spoke, and the dreamer facing her spoke compassionately.

"You poor little thing!" he said, and his eyes ran over the pathetic, unlovely figure.



"'Do I know anybody worth knowing?'"

"It would be good to think of you in the warm sunlight—as good as being there oneself. And, after all, if there is to be a chance for either of us, it is as likely to come to you as to me. We are both drudges, and if some wandering rich man should want to take a drudge away with him southwards—that is how my fancy pictures it—he might as well choose you as me. As well? No, better, for I am not even conscientious, and it does not need much knowledge of you to see that you are a worker. So you would make the better slave of the two. Let us hope for it, then. A faint hope, though, isn't it? Oh, this cruel London!"

The train stopped, and the stream of passengers, bearing them with it, hustled

them apart on the platform and swept them into the bustling streets.

The unexpected happened only a fortnight later. The young man felt his shoulder tapped as he elbowed his way into an eating-house one Saturday, turned, and recognised a popular journalist who had taken a desultory interest in him.

"The very fellow I wanted to see," said the journalist. "Come and lunch with me and give me an account of yourself. You look more ghost-like than ever. Now sit down."

He ordered a lunch, and the young man drummed on the table with his fingers. The abrupt greeting jarred on him, and he resented being dragged out thus rudely from his shell. The journalist recognised the symptoms and smiled. He was used to variations of thin-skinned youth; the clever ones, he argued, were usually built that way.

"I wanted to ask you," he said, dusting his chop with pepper, "if you know Mrs. Trenton, author of 'The Moon Phases.' Stout, heavy party, with a nimble pen."

"Do I know anybody worth knowing?" said the other, with a gesture of impatience. "I have read 'The Moon Phases,' of course."

"Ah, well, all right," nodded the journalist, with imperturbable good temper. A good many people thought him well worth cultivating; but he was not small-minded. "I was dining there yesterday—she can cater, that woman!—and she wanted to know if I knew of anyone, male or female, who would come to her as secretary for the winter. She goes to Algiers or Tunis, or somewhere—yes! it was Algiers—at the beginning of next month, and she wants said secretary to follow in her train, along with her husband and the daughter and the whole *ménage*, you know. She will pay——," and he named the sum.

"'I am sick of waiting.'"

The room danced before the dreamer's eyes. He did not see the other man regarding him with a half-humorous, half-benevolent twinkle between the mouthfuls of the chop, nor did he hear the clatter of plates and knives about him or the babbling of the London voices. There surged into his ears the sound of the Mediterranean, licking softly at a tawny shore, and in place of the crowded restaurant came the broad light and shade of the African city and the life of the South—warm, tender, and beautiful.

"It would suit you exactly," said the journalist. "I told her I knew the very man, and she told me to tell him to call that afternoon and have tea with her. She wants to take your measure; and you needn't be afraid—she is a genial soul and motherly withal. So."

He wiped his lips and called up the waiter.

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Then, as he rattled the change into his pocket, he turned again to the younger man.

"You've not said anything," he said. "Well?"

"I—it is difficult to find anything to say. . . . Such a thing seemed beyond—I mean I hardly dared to hope." Then he looked up with moist eyes into the other's face. "There—it is the dream of my life."

"Poor young fool," said the journalist to himself. But he shook hands quietly and went away, understanding and well-pleased with the half-hour's work. There is no one readier to help lame dogs over stiles than your man of papers and books.

The dreamer went out into the streets, where the stream of black coats was already setting homewards, and wandered on with it, full of a wild, unreasoning delight. The pendulum had swung over from depression to rapture, and he was intoxicated for the time with the joy his imagination flung before him.

At last! It was time that it had come; the poet sense had battered itself long enough against the walls that shut it in. He had not understood how his struggles had worn him, soul and body. Now, as he blundered along with the foolish, exultant gladness throbbing in his pulses, he knew what power lay within him, and what the opportunity—the blessed opportunity—could give. Inspiration, the fulfilment of his life—the mind's desire—what did it matter what name it went by? Give him but the light and food his soul craved, and how he would pour out his song that all the world might know!

His feet had carried him down King William Street, and so on to London Bridge. He was striding on without a glance, right or left, at the grey Thames slipping by below him, when a figure leaning against the parapet caught his eye and brought the triumphal march to a halt. It was the girl of the railway carriage, who stared at the crawling barges as they crept down stream through the November haze; and she looked unmistakably lonely as she stood limply there, with her back to the whirl of traffic. Her cough had been bad that morning, he remembered, and he gave an exclamation of impatience at the sight of her loitering in the raw afternoon. Then she turned her head and saw him.

"You?" she said. "Are you on your way home? I am going, too; but a long afternoon at home is not my idea of bliss, and the children wrangle so. It gives me a headache. Besides, I feel too ill to walk fast."

She looked ill, and she was shivering with weakness and cold. The contrast between her mood and his own exuberant one flashed upon him, and she noticed it at the same moment.

"Well, if I am in the dumps, you at least look unusually cheerful," she said with a little laugh. "What has happened to you since this morning? Have you had a rise of salary? Or has our dream of palm-trees and peace come true at last? It should come soon for me, for I am sick of waiting, and I shall soon be too tired to care for anything in this cruel world."

He did not answer her for some time; but he stood silently, indifferent for once to the hustling of the crowd as it streamed Surreywards across the bridge. He had just remembered her.

"What is the matter?" she said. A vagrant gust of wind swept out of the haze and fluttered her skirts, and she held her hat on with a hand that had a couple of inches of thin, chapped wrist between it and the shabby sleeve.

Well! Was there so much to choose? The girl was dying—dying for the warmth and the sunlight for which they both longed so bitterly. She knew the heart-pain as well as he, and she was so much less fitted to stand against it. He knew, as the starving man might know of another's agony, where the ache lurked, and how the hot tears came at night when none should mark their falling. He knew what the winter meant to the sick body and the hopeless soul.

Yet—*if* she went! To weigh the thing impartially, with the eye of the outsider. Would she count for much, the little, sickly thing for whom not a soul would sorrow, as sorrow goes in a world of heartaches, against that one talent of his, that was so real, and yet existed only a chained and hidden prisoner? He had not deceived himself: the power was there. And could he dare to thrust it back again into the blackness, whence it would creep out only to tear him with the madness of his longing?

But a human life must count for more than a sea of human thought, and not all the songs of the poets were worth the mystery of the living, breathing body. Besides, he pitied her.

"Something very good is the matter," he said. "I have heard to-day of an appointment that I believe you can have for the asking, and—it will take you to the South."

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A REMARKABLE WOMAN:

THE STRANGE STORY OF LADY HESTER STANHOPE.

By Walford D. Green, M.P.

LADY HESTER STANHOPE was probably one of the strangest and most remarkable women who ever lived, and no European woman ever passed through a more varied and exciting life. She was the daughter of the third Earl, "Republican" Stanhope, or "minority of one," as he was often called, from the fact that he warmly sympathised with the rights of man and the French revolutionists, though his democratic motions in the House of Lords never attracted any support. He was an engineer of much talent, and was fond of buying large estates in order to make new canals through them. There is no doubt that Lady Hester inherited much of her mental strength from him. Her mother was a Pitt, daughter of the great Lord Chatham, and sister of William Pitt, the most powerful minister, perhaps, in English history. Nothing about herself pleased Lady Hester more than her likeness to the great Chatham, and she never pretended to feel the least sympathy with her father's democratic theories. One of her earliest memories was of the manner in which she illustrated to him the practical inconvenience of such theories. When he decided to do without any carriage she walked the muddy country lanes on a pair of stilts, and on his inquiring the reason, said that they suited her very well, but how could poor Lady Stanhope manage to get about? The democrat came to reason at once and ordered a carriage for his wife, but still insisted that there should be no armorial bearings! Her early life was passed in the large country house at Chevening, in Kent, and there was nothing about it specially remarkable until she went to live with her uncle, Mr. Pitt, who was then Prime Minister. From that time she was a personage, ruling the household of Mr. Pitt, associating as friend and equal with the King and the Royal dukes, helping to entertain and to judge between good and bad friends, taking a large share in the distribution of Government patronage, and making many enemies by her openly shown haughtiness of temper and by the free use of speech for which she was ever famous. Till his death in 1806 she lived with him, the brilliant centre of a brilliant

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circle; but then her wanderings and her troubles began. She was granted by Parliament a pension of £1,200 a year; but this was not enough to enable her to live as a great lady, and she would not consent to live in London in any humbler fashion; so she bought for herself a tiny cottage in a remote Welsh mountain village, where she could at least reign without any rival, and be at once lady tyrant and lady bountiful, for the maxim of Milton's Satan—

> Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven—

was very much to the mind of Lady Hester. She had many offers of marriage, of course, for she was a woman of imperious beauty; but happy were they who were rejected, for the man who had married her would have led a lofty but burdensome existence. Harder is the way of the man who marries a woman of genius and temper, even than the way of the woman who marries such a man. The Welsh village proved attractive for a year or two, but too many visitors came to see the hermit from Society, and then the commanding passion asserted itself and Lady Hester decided to travel in the East.

It would be impossible to understand, or even appreciate, the influence she wielded over the wild tribes of the East, and the romantic vicissitudes of her life among them, without first attempting to realise what her character was. One quality lay at the root of her character. Nothing ever disturbed that calm confidence which grew out of her lofty pride in her own race and birth. Such serene and assured pride made it seem to Lady Hester only natural that she should command the inhabitants of this world and shine among the angels of the next. "What are principles to me?" she once said. "I am a Pitt!" How should a Pitt be judged by the ordinary rules? A Pitt would love virtue, because virtue is the crown of the highest and proudest humanity, but he would not be subject to the common conventions of morality; he would be too courageous to give thought to precaution, too confident in himself to be haunted by that anxious problem of the middle-class mind—the discovery of sources whence a regular income is to be drawn. These beliefs may be called the illusions of the aristocratic mind, and there is no type more abounding in humour than that which is possessed by the illusions without possessing the qualities of aristocracy—the man or woman who by accident of birth belongs to the leaders, and by the law of character to the sheep who need a shepherd. But Lady Hester possessed both the illusions and the qualities. By birth, by character, by supreme faith in herself, she was a woman destined to lead. Here is a passage from her conversation which is very characteristic of her, and very amusing from its contrast to the current tone of our own day:—

"Doctor, don't you see the wide difference there is between refined people and vulgar ones? There is Lady Isabella and Lady Helen, with a tyrannical and unkind mother—see how obedient and submissive they are; and I dare say, though the daughters of a duchess, had she put them to do the most menial offices, they would have done them. But vulgar people are always fancying themselves affronted, and their pride is hurt, and they are afraid of being lowered, and God knows what! You will think it a strange thing to say, but it is my opinion that the vices of high-born people are better than the virtues of low-born ones. By low-born, I do not mean poor people, for there are many without a sixpence who have high sentiments. It is that, among the low-born, there is no spring of action that is good even in their virtues. If they are laborious and industrious, it is for gain, not for the love of labour; if they are learned, it is from pedantry; if they are charitable, it is from ostentation; if religious, from hypocrisy; if studious of health, it is to gratify their gormandising, and so on. . . . The good or bad race must peep out. God created certain races from the beginning; and although the pure may be crossed, and the cart-horse be taken out of the cart and put to the saddle, their foals will always show their good or bad blood. High descent always shows itself, and low always will peep out."

When Kinglake went to visit her she enlarged on this idea of race to him, telling him that the most unsullied families in England were to be found among Cornish miners. There is, of course, no touch of snobbishness in these frankly expressed opinions, nor did they make her in the least degree harsh or cruel to the low-born, unless the low-born affected greatness or grandeur; but they made her a great believer in the necessity of subordination in society, in the virtue of good leadership and the power to command, which she held to be quite as essential among European peoples as among the Bedouin tribes. The same conviction of the essential inequality of men deeply affected her religious ideas, the basis of which was the supposed knowledge, secretly and mystic-

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ally acquired, that the Messiah would appear in the East, and would be followed by the warlike Arabs, the chosen race, in his conquest of Europe. There is no doubt that she regarded herself as in some degree a prophet, and believed that she held that high place in the spiritual hierarchy which a Pitt might reasonably expect. In all her conversations on religious matters there is a great deal of eccentricity, but it is not easy for the Western mind to understand the mysticism which is so readily, and almost inevitably, acquired in the East. The celebrated Frenchman, Lamartine, in his "Voyage en Orient," gives this account of the impression which long conversation with Lady Hester produced upon him:—

"It seemed to me that the religious doctrines of Lady Hester were a clever but confused amalgam of the different religions in the midst of which she had condemned herself to live—mysterious as the Druses, whose mystic secret she alone, perhaps, of all the world had acquired; resigned and fatalist as the Mohammedan; looking for the Messiah with the Jew, and with the Christian professing the worship of Christ and the practice of His loving morality. Add to these the fantastic colours and marvellous dreams of an imagination coloured by the East and excited by solitary meditation, with certain visions, revealed, perhaps, by the Arab astrologers, and you will have an idea of this strange and lofty mixture of ideas, which it is easier to dismiss as folly than to analyse and understand. No, this woman is not mad. . . . If I must pronounce judgment, I should say rather that it is an assumed madness, studied and conscious of itself, which has good reasons for feigning to be mad. The powerful fascination which her genius has exercised over the Arab populations proves that this pretended madness is only a means to an end. To the men of this land of wonders, of rocks and deserts, whose imagination is more coloured and more stormy than the horizon of their sands or their lakes, the word of Mahomet or of Lady Hester is necessary! They must have commerce with the stars, or prophecies, or miracles, or the second sight of genius. . . . I should not be surprised if, in the near future, one part of the destiny she has promised to herself should be realised—an empire in Arabia, a throne in Jerusalem! The least political disturbance in the region where she dwells might raise her even to that position."

Exactly the same impression of power and authority was made upon everyone who came into contact with Lady Hester. She lived for some time with great magnificence at Constantinople and passed thence to Syria, where the brilliant victories of Sir Sidney Smith had made the name of England a name of power. The rumour of her high rank, her splendour and bravery, and her relationship to Pitt, had preceded her, and she is said to have put a seal upon her greatness by making a present of £500 to the sheik who ruled some of the desert tribes between Damascus and Palmyra. Her great journey was across this desert to the city of Palmyra, over which the famed Zenobia had reigned. Travelling in the East was hazardous work in those days, when tribe warred against tribe, so that even the protection of one sheik might mean only an added danger of attack from the followers of another. Lady Hester, however, performed the journey with a considerable escort of Bedouins, her caravan comprising thirty-nine camels and twenty-five horsemen, though the only Europeans with her were her doctor and maid. Her chief danger lay in the risk of mutiny among her wild followers, who might well have been tempted by the thought of the immense ransom they would have expected for so illustrious a prisoner; but this danger was averted by the mixed fear and loyalty which she inspired. Once they were attacked by a company of Faydans, but she insisted on interviewing their leader, who prostrated himself before her and exclaimed, "It is our enemies the Anirys we seek; but you we set upon our heads!" So the Faydans departed in search of the Anirys. The arrival in Palmyra was one of the happy moments in Lady Hester's career, for the reception she received from the inhabitants was worthy even of her grandsire, Chatham. The exultant Palmyrans knew the fame of the great prophetess, and were more than half convinced that the glories of Zenobia were to be revived. The whole city thronged to meet her. The city warriors executed a realistic sham fight; the laureates chanted poems expressly composed for the occasion; on the pedestals, where of old famous statues had stood, beautiful girls were standing, who remained immobile till Lady Hester reached them, and then leapt down to join the dancing crowd which thronged on either side of her, and threw their garlands of flowers upon her path! And during all the days she remained in their city there were anxious, eager crowds of men and women

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round the house where the great English prophetess dwelt.

Fascinating, however, as experiences such as these must have been, after two or three years of a nomadic life Lady Hester settled down in a lonely monastery near Saide, among the hills of Lebanon. There she stayed for the remainder of her life, and it was there that she was visited by Lamartine, Kinglake, and many others. Strangely monotonous and solitary this life must have been to the woman who had been a queen of fashion in the proudest capital of Europe. But her pride was never broken. She never doubted that wisdom had left the Europe which she had deserted, and the mystic faiths of the East still beckoned and led her further into the vague regions of dreamland. Of her appearance at this time Kinglake, in "Eothen," gives the following description :—

"The woman before me had exactly the person of a prophetess—not, indeed, of the divine sibyl imagined by Domenichino, so sweetly distracted betwixt love and mystery, but of a good, business-like, practical prophetess, long used to exercise of her sacred calling. I have been told by those who knew Lady Hester Stanhope in her youth that any notion of a resemblance betwixt her and the great Chatham must have been fanciful; but at the time of my seeing her the large commanding features of the gaunt woman, then sixty years old or more, certainly reminded me of the statesman that lay dying in the House of Lords, according to Copley's picture. Her face was of the most astonishing whiteness; she wore a very large turban, made seemingly of pale cashmere shawls, and so disposed as to conceal the hair; her dress, from the chin down to the point at which it was concealed by the drapery on her lap, was a mass of white linen loosely folding—an ecclesiastical sort of affair—more like a surplice than any of those blessed creations which our souls love under the names of 'dress' and 'frock' and 'bodice.'"

WILLIAM PITT.

Her occupations during these long and lonely years were dreaming, smoking, and conversation. She had a perfectly masculine passion for tobacco, and at one time there were a hundred and two pipes in her room. Her conversations were extraordinarily prolonged, generally beginning at about ten of the evening and continuing till four or five of the following morning—"from the dusk of one day till the dawn of the next," like Lord Palmerston's famous speech. Once she conversed with a young man for twelve hours, till finally astonishment and fatigue made him faint away! Her talk was brilliant, erratic, dazzling, full of mysticism, and yet full also of racy mundane anecdote. She had the mastery of an abundant vocabulary of invective, and there were many subjects on which she felt and spoke scornfully: "with all the force and vehemence of her invective, she displayed a sober, patient and minute attention to the details of vituperation." If there was eccentricity in her mind and in her life there was also a dauntless and defiant bravery in her bearing, our admiration of which must remain stronger than any astonishment at her vagaries. Syria was then under the charming rule of Ibrahim Bey, a man whose violence would have earned the reproach even of Abdul Hamid, and strengthened even the forcible vocabulary of Mr. William Watson. To his subjects his name was a terror, the thought of his anger an agony. Lady Hester alone defied his commands and smiled at his threats. Her monastery was the refuge of many Albanians who had fled from him.

"In truth (says Kinglake), this half-ruined convent, guarded by the proud heart of an English gentlewoman, was the only spot throughout all Syria and Palestine in which the will of Mehemet Ali and his fierce lieutenant was not the law. More than once had the Pasha of Egypt commanded that Ibrahim should have the Albanians delivered up to him; but this white woman of the

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mountain (grown classical, not by books, but by very pride) answered only with a disdainful invitation to 'come and take them.' Whether it was that Ibrahim was acted upon by any superstitious dread of interfering with the prophetess (a notion not at all incompatible with his character as an able Oriental commander), or that he feared the ridicule of putting himself in collision with a gentlewoman, he certainly never ventured to attack the sanctuary; and so long as Chatham's granddaughter breathed a breath of life there was always this one hillock, and that, too, in the midst of a most populous district, which stood out and kept its freedom. Mehemet Ali used to say, I am told, that the Englishwoman had given him more trouble than all the insurgent people of Syria and Palestine."

There is one other story which illustrates the extraordinary bravery of this woman, and it is impossible to avoid telling it in the words of Kinglake, one of the greatest of all the tellers of stories in English prose:—

"It was when the heroic qualities of the Englishwoman were just beginning to be felt amongst the people of the desert that she was marching one day along with the forces of the tribe to which she had allied herself. She perceived that preparations for an engagement were going on, and upon her making inquiry as to the cause, the sheik at first affected mystery and concealment, but at last confessed that war had been declared against his tribe on account of his alliance with the English princess, and that they were now unfortunately to be attacked by a very superior force. He made it appear that Lady Hester was the sole cause of hostility betwixt his tribe and the impending enemy, and that his sacred duty of protecting the Englishwoman whom he had admitted as his guest was the only obstacle that prevented an amicable settlement of the dispute. . . . No fear of the consequences, however terrible to him and his whole people, should induce him to dream of abandoning his illustrious guest. The heroine instantly took her part. It was not for her to be a source of danger to her friends, but rather to her enemies; so she resolved to turn away from the people, and trust for help to none save only her haughty self. The sheiks affected to dissuade her from so rash a course, and fairly told her . . . that there were no means of allaying the hostility felt towards her, and that the whole face of the desert would be swept by the horsemen of her enemies so carefully as to make her escape into other districts almost impossible. The brave woman was not to be moved by terrors of this kind, and bidding farewell to the tribe which had honoured and protected her, she turned her horse's head and rode straight away, without friend or follower. Hours had elapsed, and for some time she had been alone in the centre of the round horizon, when her quick eye perceived some horsemen in the distance. . . . Presently some hundreds of Bedouins, fully armed, galloped up to her, ferociously shouting, and apparently intending to take her life at the instant with their pointed spears. Her face at the time was covered with the *yashmak*, according to Eastern usage, but at the moment when the foremost of the horsemen had all but reached her with their spears, she stood up in her stirrups, withdrew the *yashmak* that veiled the terrors of her countenance, waved her arm slowly and disdainfully, and cried out with a loud voice, 'Avaunt!' The horsemen recoiled from her glance, but not in terror. The threatening yells of the assailants were suddenly changed for loud shouts of joy and admiration at the bravery of the stately Englishwoman, and festive gun-shots were fired on all sides around her honoured head. The truth was that the party belonged to the tribe with which she had allied herself, and that the threatened attack . . . had been contrived for the mere purpose of testing her courage. The day ended in a great feast prepared to do honour to the heroine, and from that time her power over the minds of the people grew rapidly." Another happy moment in Lady Hester's career!

The last years of her life were passed in much hardship and poverty, as, owing to the number of her debts, Lord Palmerston paid her pension to her creditors. Her pride remained unbroken to the last. It is not as the brilliant woman of Society, nor even as the follower and expounder of an esoteric religion, that Lady Hester is to be remembered, but as the woman who defied the terrors of Mehemet Ali and Ibrahim Bey, and rode forth into the desert without friend or follower.

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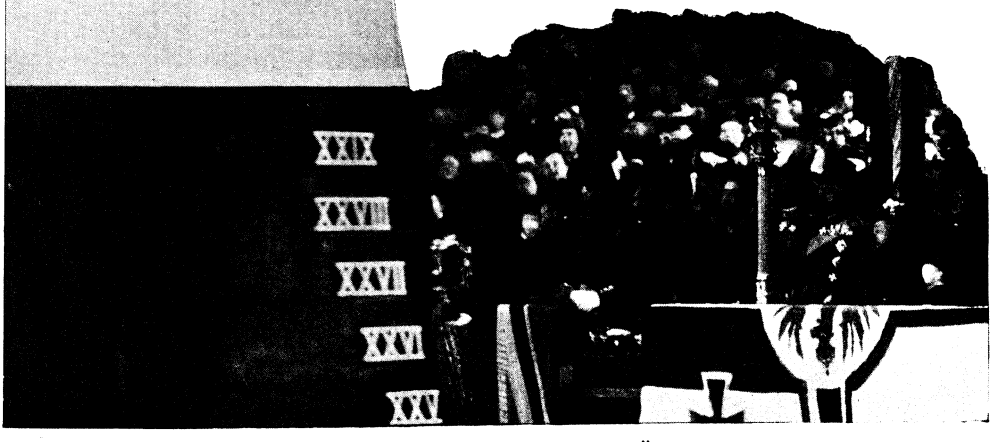
THE LAUNCHING OF A BATTLESHIP.

By Frederick A. Talbot.

NO dockyard, whether it be the property of the Government or one belonging to a private shipbuilding firm, ever assumes such a gay and festive appearance as it does for the launching of a large battleship. Every Britisher is keenly alive to the fact that his country attributes her position amongst the nations of the world to her supremacy upon the seas. Consequently he evinces a justifiable pride whenever another effort is made to make invincibility yet more invincible by the addition of another vessel to an already splendid fleet.

There are two methods of launching battleships. Occasionally, in a Royal dockyard, the vessel is constructed in a dry dock, and when completed the water is allowed to flow in, floating the vessel when a sufficient depth is attained within the actual shelter of the dock. But the more general practice is to construct the vessel upon dry land, and afterwards transfer it bodily to the water by means of a slipway. In the first process no fears need be entertained as to whether the operation will be successful; but when the huge, inert mass is



THE QUEEN LAUNCHING THE "ROYAL SOVEREIGN" AT PORTSMOUTH.
Photo by West and Sons, Southsea.

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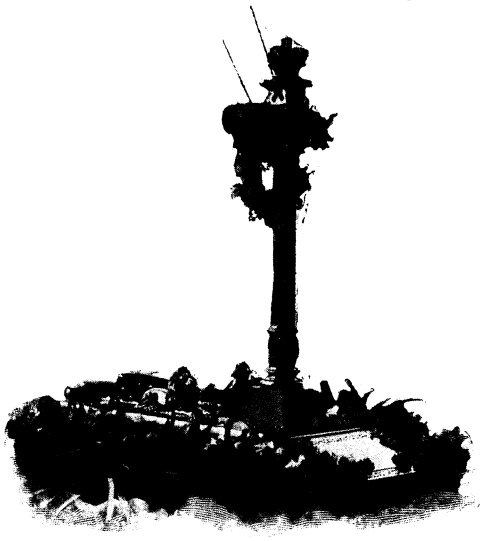
conveyed from the land into the water, the operation is fraught with a considerable amount of risk, and, unless it is accomplished



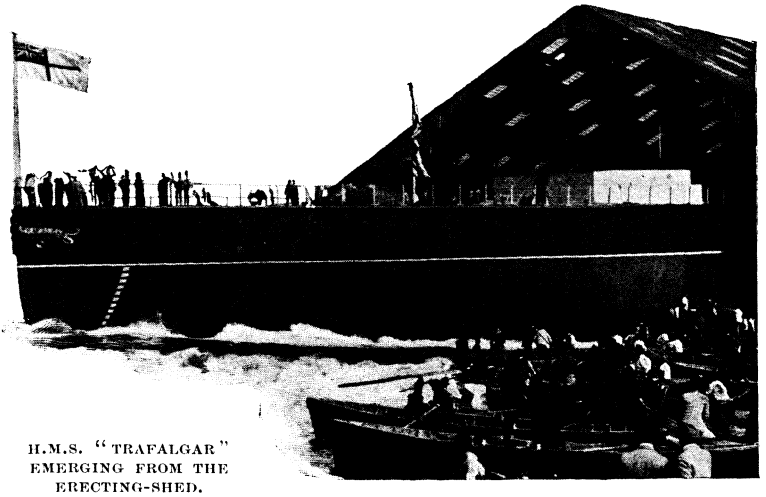
ELECTRICAL DEVICE BY WHICH THE QUEEN LAUNCHED THE "ROYAL SOVEREIGN."
Photo by West and Sons, Southsea.

with extreme precision, considerable damage may follow in its wake. Fortunately, in these latter days mechanical ingenuity has attained such a high standard of perfection that accidents are few and far between.

In her passage from the land into the water the vessel glides along what appears to be a gigantic pair of railway metals, or, as they are termed in the nautical vernacular, "standing ways." These ways, which are laid several feet apart, are comprised of huge baulks of timber, several feet in thickness, laid parallel to the keel of the vessel. As may well be understood, it is essential that this permanent way should not move in any direction, and this can only be successfully ensured by fixing the rails to a very solid foundation. This is accomplished by bolting, rivetting, and bracing the longitudinal sections of timber to heavy cross-pieces, just as railway metals are bolted to the sleepers upon which they lie, while stays and props are liberally employed to ensure absolute rigidity.

Along these "standing ways" move the "sliding ways," carrying the cradle upon which the vessel rests. The "sliding ways" consist of heavy, solid lengths of timber of about the same width and thickness as the "standing ways." To ensure, however, that they shall "keep the metals" while travelling along the standing ways, and not burst outwards, in which event the cradle would collapse and the vessel capsize, the outer edges of the standing ways are made to project over the edges of the sliding ways so that the cradle cannot by any means gradually work outwards, unless the standing ways go with it, a very unlikely contingency, thanks to the care taken to prevent the standing ways moving in any direction whatever. The principle of the construction of both the standing and sliding ways is very comprehensively illustrated in our photograph of the launch of the Japanese armoured cruiser *Tokina*. This was kindly lent to us by Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth & Co., Ltd., the well-known shipbuilding firm on the Tyne, who constructed the vessel.

Upon the sliding ways rests one of the most vital parts of the launching gear. This is the cradle upon which the whole of the 8,000 tons of metal, or whatever be the weight of the vessel, are supported. The cradle extends throughout the length of the vessel, but it is at the bow and the stern that it is most required. The ends of the cradle which



H.M.S. "TRAFALGAR" EMERGING FROM THE ERECTING-SHED.
Photo by Symonds and Co., Portsmouth.

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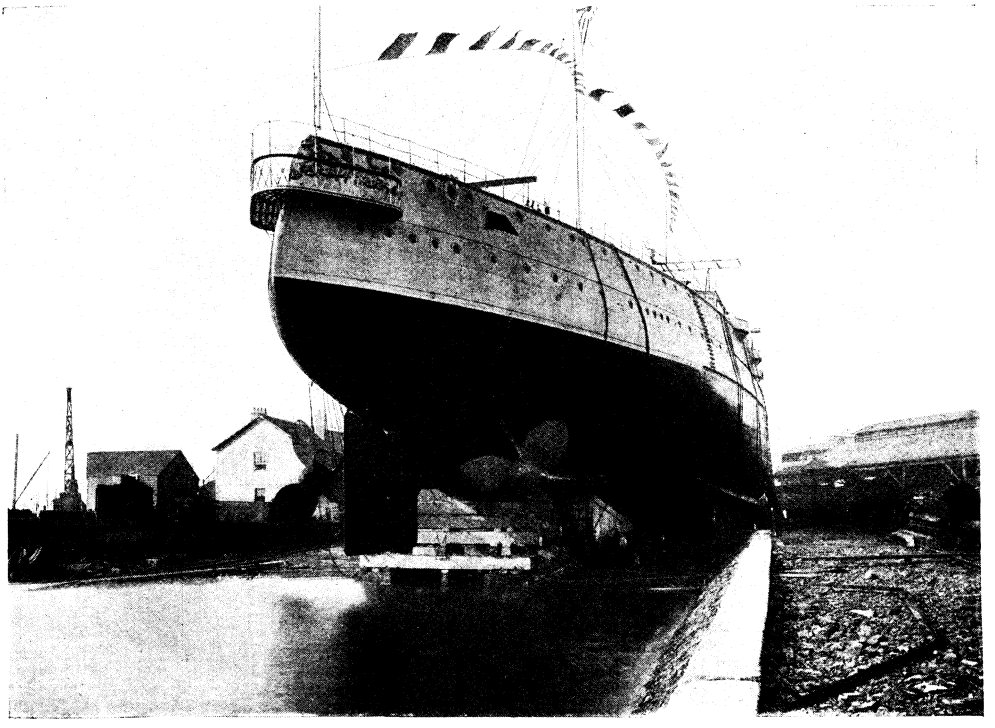
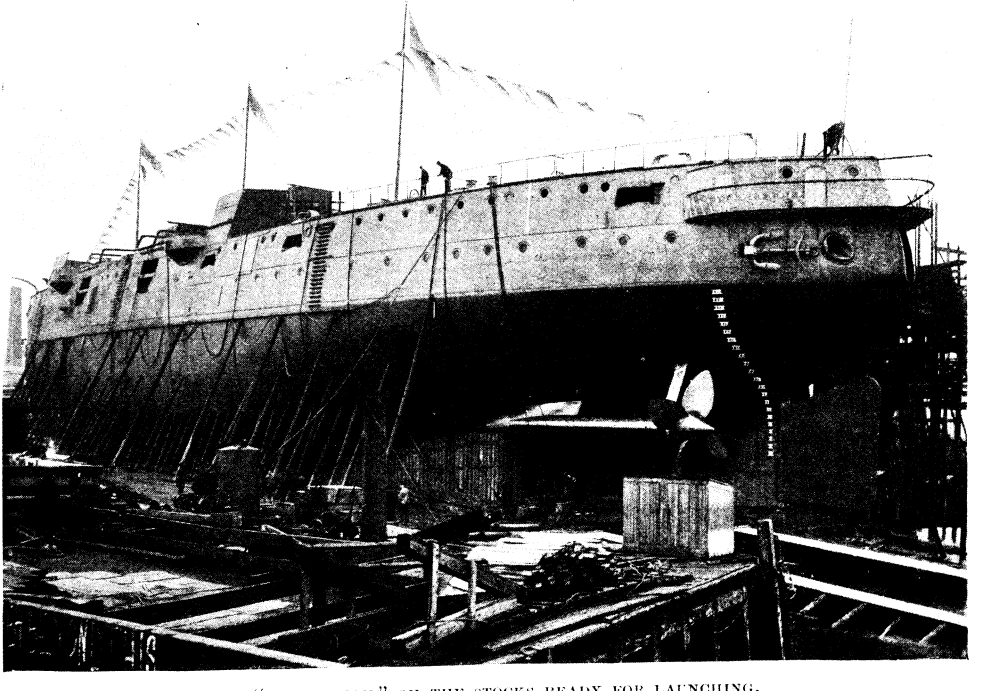


STERN VIEW OF THE JAPANESE BATTLESHIP "YASHIMA" JUST BEFORE LAUNCHING, SHOWING THE TWIN-SCREWS AND LAUNCHING-CRADLE.



H.M.S. "RESOLUTION" ON THE STOCKS READY FOR LAUNCHING.
Photos by W. Parry, South Shields.

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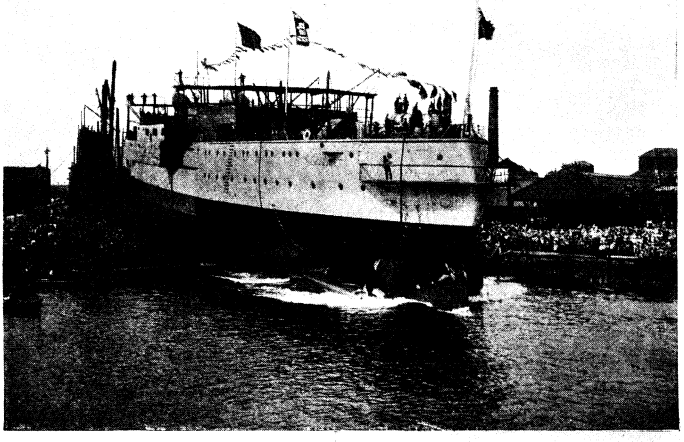
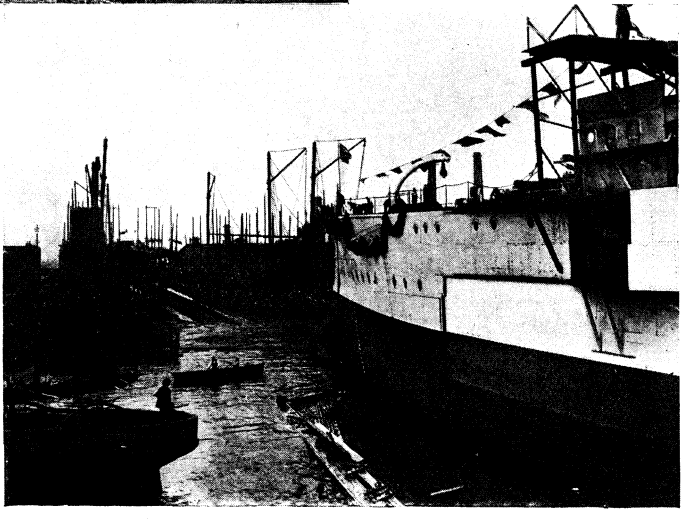
support the hull of the vessel are bevelled, so that they may press tightly against the sides of the ship.

Previously to the launching, a thorough, thick coating of grease is applied to both the standing and sliding ways. By this means, it will be readily seen, the surfaces of the ways are made exceedingly slippery, and, with the slight incline already in her favour, the weight of the vessel is sufficient to carry her along these well-greased rails with the utmost ease and regularity. Even this apparently simple operation has to be most carefully executed, for should the application of the grease be insufficient, or should the material itself become hardened, the vessel during her short passage to the water may suddenly stop and resist all efforts to restart her. Such mishaps have occurred, and besides taxing the skill of the engineers to the utmost, sometimes entail a heavy expense. The launching of the *Leviathan*, in the Thames on November 3, 1857, is a case in point. When this vessel had been duly christened, and the last tethering rope was severed, she refused to budge an inch. Powerful rams were applied and an impetus was given, which succeeded in moving her a few feet. But again she stopped and this time successfully resisted the aid of every engineering appliance that was employed in the attempt to move her. On one occasion an enormous hydraulic ram, developing the tremendous pressure of 12,000 lbs. to the square inch, gave way. It was not until three months had elapsed that the *Leviathan* was at last launched upon the bosom of the Thames and was towed to her moorings at Deptford. No wonder, then, that the engineers, remembering that "prevention is better than cure," are extremely liberal in their application of the necessary grease to the "ways." For a large battleship the quantity of unguent utilised is something like 14,500 pounds. At the moment of launching the ponderous mass is simply maintained in its position by the "dog-shores"—large pieces of hard wood fixed so as to hold the sliding ways in check only, but so adjusted that a smart downward blow is sufficient to remove them.



H.M.S. "ALBION" GLIDING INTO THE WATER AT BLACKWALL.



H.M.S. "ALBION" LAUNCHED.

Photos by the London Stereoscopic Co.

A short religious service always precedes the launching of an English battleship. The psalm sung is generally part of the one hundred and seventh, beginning with the verse, "They that go down to the sea

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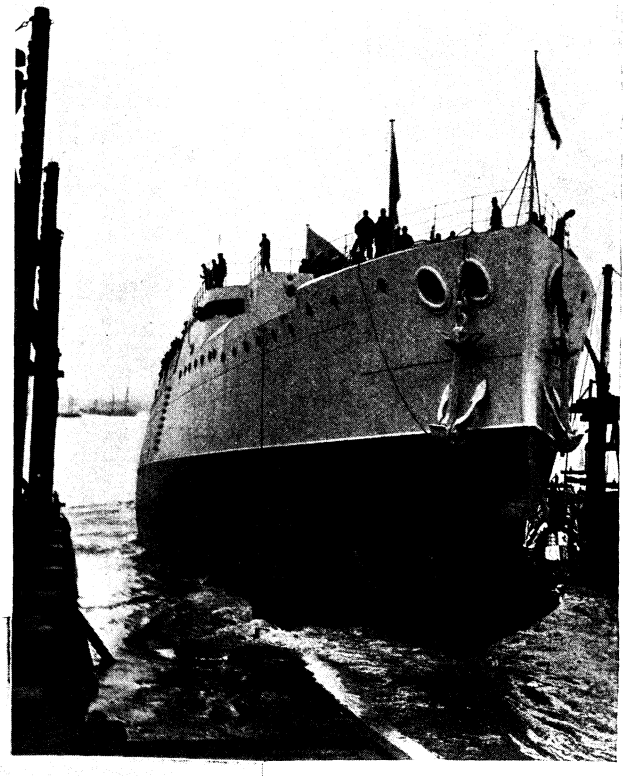
in ships," followed by a suitable hymn, such as the one commencing—

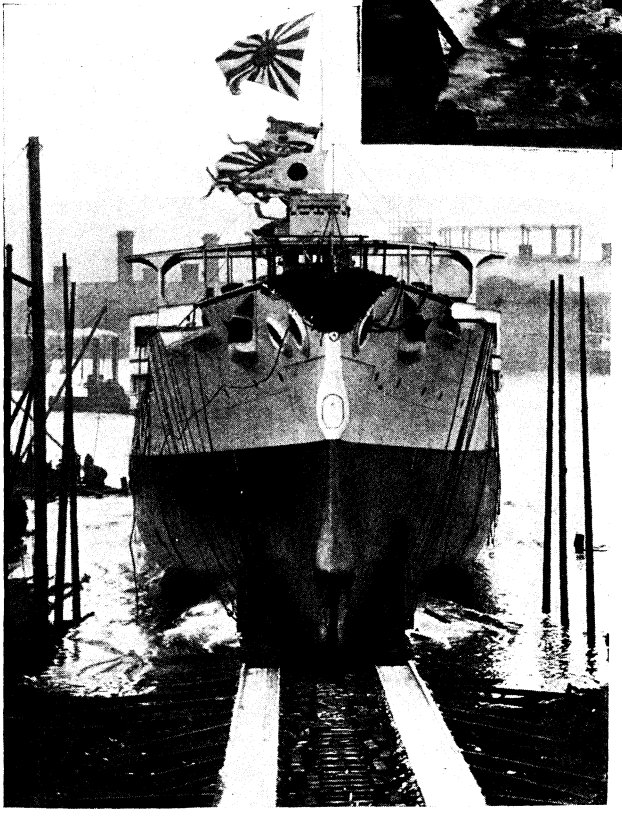
O Lord, be with us when we sail
Upon the lonely waters.

When the final prayer has been recited, the lady who is performing the launching ceremony—this honourable office is generally fulfilled by a member of the fair sex—breaks a bottle of champagne across the bows of the ironclad and wishes "success to the vessel and all that sail in her." Then, amid the huzzas of a patriotic crowd who have gathered from far and near to witness the launch, and the joyful strains of a band, she severs with a chisel the rope that maintains the "monkeys"—huge masses of metal weighing about a ton — in position. Suddenly released,



H.M.S. "CANOPUS" LEAVING THE "WAYS" AT PORTSMOUTH.

Photo by Symonds and Co., Portsmouth.



THE ARMOURED CRUISER "TOKINA," BUILT FOR THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT, TAKING THE WATER AT NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

these crash down upon the "dog-shores," knocking them away. There is a moment's pause, and then, by her own weight, in the words of Longfellow's telling lines—

. . . She stirs!
She starts—she moves—she seems to feel
The thrill of life along her keel,
And, spurning with her foot the ground,
With one exulting, joyous bound,
She leaps into the ocean's arms!

Occasionally, when the "dog-shores" are removed, the vessel refuses to budge. In this event an hydraulic ram is brought into play, and by its irresistible force the vessel is impelled on her way, gathering impetus every moment.

As the sliding way leaves the standing way, the cradle falls away from the ship's side and is afterwards recovered.

The vessel travelling down the

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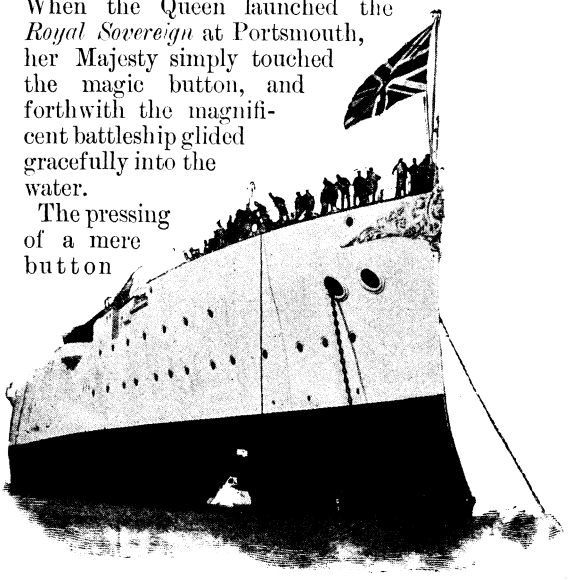
incline has gathered considerable momentum by the time the water is reached, so that directly she is afloat steps have at once to be

MISS ESTHER CORNISH, AGED SIX MONTHS, LAUNCHING H.M.S. "ARDENT" AT CHISWICK.

taken to arrest the progress of the cumbersome mass by means of the checking chains. This reining-in process is so effectual that as a rule a first-class battleship is brought to a stand-still before she has travelled six hundred feet.

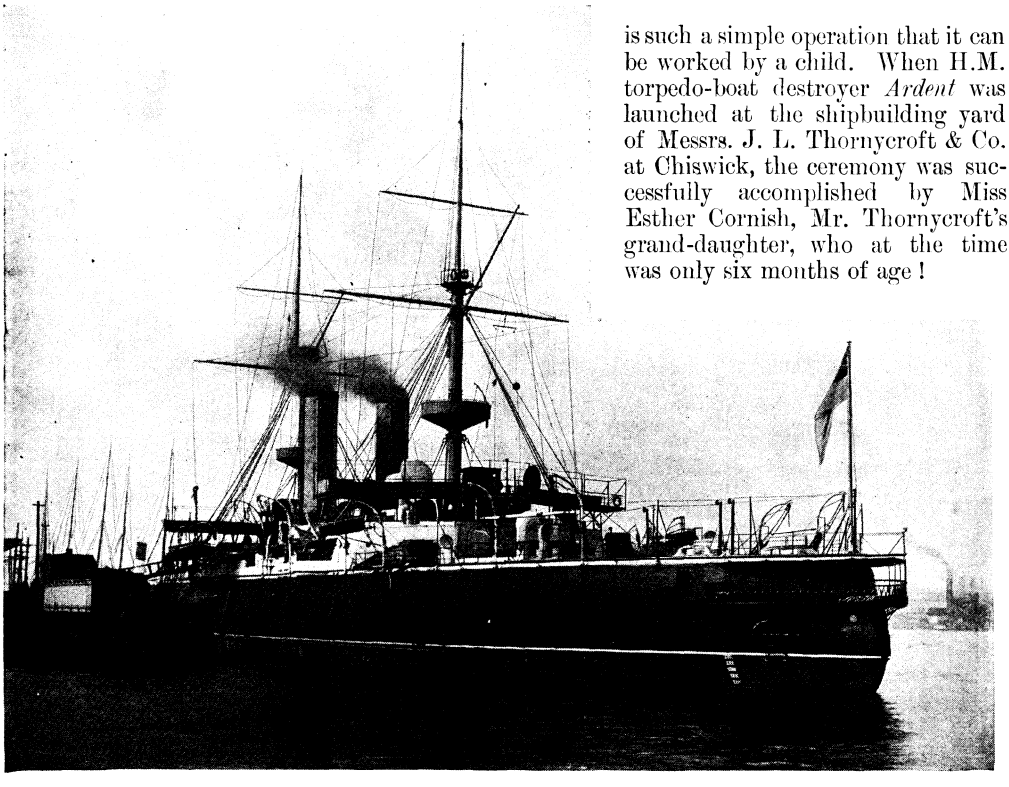
In some instances, instead of the "monkeys" being released by the cutting of the rope with a chisel, the operation is performed by simply pressing a button, electricity executing the rest of the necessary work. When the Queen launched the *Royal Sovereign* at Portsmouth, her Majesty simply touched the magic button, and forthwith the magnificent battleship glided gracefully into the water.

The pressing of a mere button



H.M.S. "ROYAL ARTHUR" LAUNCHED.
Photo by Symonds and Co., Portsmouth.

is such a simple operation that it can be worked by a child. When H.M. torpedo-boat destroyer *Ardent* was launched at the shipbuilding yard of Messrs. J. L. Thornycroft & Co. at Chiswick, the ceremony was successfully accomplished by Miss Esther Cornish, Mr. Thornycroft's grand-daughter, who at the time was only six months of age!



THE COMPLETED BATTLESHIP.—H.M.S. "REVENGE" READY FOR SEA.
Photo by W. Parry, South Shields.

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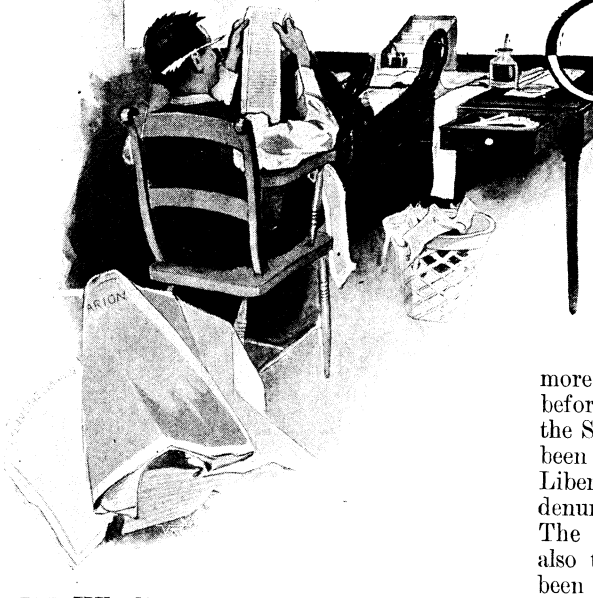
THE BOOM IN THE CALAVERAS CLARION



BY BRET HARTE

Illustrated by WARWICK GOBLE.

THE editorial sanctum of the *Calaveras Clarion* opened upon the "composing room" of that paper on the one side, and gave apparently upon the rest of Calaveras County upon the other. For, situated on the very outskirts of the settlement and the summit of a very steep hill, the pines sloped away from the editorial windows to the long valley of the South Fork and—infinity. The little wooden building had invaded Nature without subduing it. It was filled night and day with the murmur of pines and their fragrance. Squirrels scampered over its roof when it was not preoccupied by woodpeckers, and a printer's devil had once seen a nest-building blue jay enter the composing window, flutter before one of the slanting type-cases with an air of deliberate selection, and then fly off with a vowel in its bill.

Amidst these sylvan surroundings the temporary editor of the *Clarion* sat in his sanctum, reading the proofs of an editorial. As he was occupying that position during a six weeks' absence of the *bonâ fide* editor and proprietor, he was consequently reading the proof with some anxiety and responsibility. It had been suggested to him by certain citizens that the *Clarion* needed a firmer and more aggressive policy towards the Bill before the Legislature for the wagon road to the South Fork. Several Assembly men had been "got at" by the rival settlement of Liberty Hill, and a scathing exposure and denunciation of such methods was necessary. The interests of their own township were also to be "whooped up." All this had been vigorously explained to him, and he had grasped the spirit, if not always the facts, of his informants. It is to be feared, therefore, that he was perusing his article more with reference to its vigour than his own convictions. And yet he was not so greatly absorbed as to be unmindful of the murmur of the pines without, his half-savage environment, and the lazy talk of his sole companions—the foreman and printer in the adjoining room.

"Bet your life! I've always said that a man *inside* a newspaper office could hold his own agin any outsider that wanted to play rough or tried to raid the office! Thar's the press, and thar's the printin' ink and roller! Folks talk a heap o' the power o' the Press!—I tell ye, ye don't half know it. Why, when old Kernel Fish was editin' the *Sierra Banner*, one o' them bullies that he'd lampooned in the *Banner* fought his way past the Kernel in the office, into the composin' room, to wreck everythin' and 'pye' all the types. Spoffrel—ye don't remember Spoffrel?—little red-haired man?—was foreman. Spoffrel fended him off with the roller and got one good dab inter his eyes that blinded him, and then Spoffrel sorter skirmished him over to the press—a plain lever just like ours—whar the locked-up forme

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of the inside was still a-lyin'! Then, quick as lightnin', Spoffrel tilts him over agin it, and *he* throws out his hand and ketches hold o' the forme to steady himself, when Spoffrel just runs the forme and the hand under the press and downs with the lever! And that held the feller fast as grim death! And when at last he begs off, and Spoff lets him loose, the hull o' that 'ere lampooning article he objected to was printed right onto the skin o' his hand! Fact, and it wouldn't come off, either."

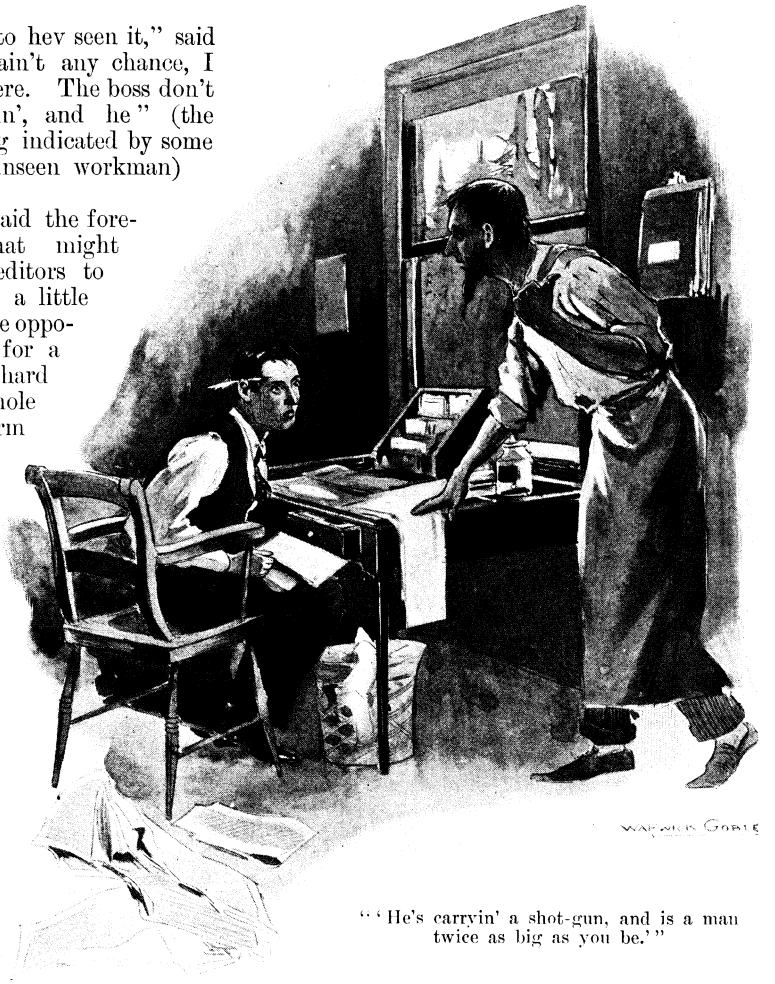
"Gosh, but I'd like to hev seen it," said the printer. "There ain't any chance, I reckon, o' such a sight here. The boss don't take no risks lampoonin', and he" (the editor knew he was being indicated by some unseen gesture of the unseen workman) "ain't that style."

"Ye never kin tell," said the foreman didactically, "what might happen! I've known editors to get into a fight jest for a little innercent bedevilin' o' the opposite party. Sometimes for a misprint. Old man Pritchard of the *Argus* onct had a hole blown through his arm because his proof reader had called Colonel Starbottle's speech an 'ignominious' defence, when the old man hed written 'ingenuous' defence."

The editor paused in his proof-reading. He had just come upon the sentence: "We cannot congratulate Liberty Hill—in its superior elevation—upon the ignominious silence of the representative of all Calaveras when this infamous Bill was introduced." He referred to his copy. Yes! He had certainly written "ignominious"—that was what his informants had suggested. But was he sure they were right? He had a vague recollection, also, that the representative alluded to—Senator Bradley—had fought two duels, and was a "good" though somewhat impulsive shot! He might alter the word to "ingenuous" or "ingenious"—either would be finely sarcastic, but then—there was his foreman, who would detect it! He would wait until he had finished the entire article. In that occupation he became oblivious of the next room, of a silence, a whispered conversation, which ended with a rapping at the door and the appearance of the foreman in the doorway.

"There's a man in the office who wants to see the editor," he said.

"Show him in," replied the editor briefly. He was, however, conscious that there was a singular significance in his foreman's manner, and an eager apparition of the other printer over the foreman's shoulder.



"'He's carryin' a shot-gun, and is a man twice as big as you be.'"

"He's carryin' a shot-gun, and is a man twice as big as you be," said the foreman gravely.

The editor quickly recalled his own brief and as yet blameless record in the *Clarion*. "Perhaps," he said tentatively, with a gentle smile, "he's looking for Captain Brush (the absent editor)."

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"I told him all that," said the foreman grimly, "and he said he wanted to see the man in charge."

In proportion as the editor's heart sank his outward crest arose. "Show him in," he said loftily.

"We *kin* keep him out," suggested the foreman, lingering a moment; "me and him," indicating the expectant printer behind him, "is enough for that."

"Show him up," repeated the editor firmly.

The foreman withdrew; the editor seated himself and again took up his proof. The doubtful word "ignominious" seemed to stand out of the paragraph before him; it certainly *was* a strong expression! He was about to run his pencil through it when he heard the heavy step of his visitor approaching. A sudden instinct of belligerency took possession of him and he wrathfully threw the pencil down.

The burly form of the stranger blocked the doorway. He was dressed like a miner, but his build and general physiognomy were quite distinct from the local variety. His upper lip and chin were clean-shaven, still showing the blue-black roots of the beard which covered the rest of his face and depended in a thick fleece under his throat. He carried a small bundle tied up in a silk handkerchief in one hand, and a "shot-gun" in the other, perilously at half-cock. Entering the sanctum, he put down his bundle and quietly closed the door behind him. He then drew an empty chair towards him and dropped heavily into it with his gun on his knees. The editor's heart dropped almost as heavily, although he quite composedly held out his hand.

"Shall I relieve you of your gun?"

"Thank ye, lad—noa. It's moor coomfortable wi' me, and it's main dangersome to handle on the half-cock. That's why I didn't leave 'im on the horse outside!"

At the sound of his voice and occasional accent a flash of intelligence relieved the editor's mind. He remembered that twenty miles away, in the illimitable vista from his windows, lay a settlement of English north-country miners, who, while faithfully adopting the methods, customs, and even slang of the Californians, retained many of their native peculiarities. The gun he carried on his knee however, was evidently part of the Californian imitation.

"Can I do anything for you?" said the editor blandly.

"Aye! I've coom here to bill ma woife."

"I—don't think I understand," hesitated the editor, with a smile.

"I've coom here to get ye to put into your paaper a warnin', a notiss, that onless she returns to my house in four weeks, I'll have nowt to do wi' her again."

"Oh!" said the editor, now perfectly reassured, "you want an advertisement? That's the business of the foreman—I'll call him." He was rising from his seat when the stranger laid a heavy hand on his shoulder and gently forced him down again.

"Noa, lad! I don't want noa foreman nor understrappers to take this job. I want to talk it over wi' you. *Sabe?* My woife she bin up and awaa these six months. We had a bit of difference, that ain't here nor there, but she skedaddled outer my house. I want to give her fair warning and let her know I ain't payin' any debts o' hers arter this notiss, and I ain't takin' her back arter four weeks from date."

"I see," said the editor glibly. "What's your wife's name?"

"Eliza Jane Dimmidge."

"Good," continued the editor, scribbling on the paper before him, "something like this will do: 'Whereas my wife, Eliza Jane Dimmidge, having left my bed and board without just cause or provocation, this is to give notice that I shall not be responsible for any debts of her contracting on or after this date.'"

"Ye must be a lawyer," said Mr. Dimmidge admiringly.

It was an old enough form of advertisement, and the remark showed incontestably that Mr. Dimmidge was not a native; but the editor smiled patronisingly and went on, "'And I further give notice that if she does not return within the period of four weeks from this date, I shall take such proceedings for relief as the law affords.'"

"Coom, lad, I didn't say *that*."

"But you said you wouldn't take her back."

"Aye."

"And you can't prevent her without legal proceedings. She's your wife. But you needn't take proceedings, you know. It's only a warning."

Mr. Dimmidge nodded approvingly. "That's so."

"You'll want it published for four weeks, until date?" asked the editor.

"Mebbee longer, lad."

The editor wrote "till forbid" in the margin of the paper and smiled.

"How big will it be?" said Mr. Dimmidge.

The editor took up a copy of the *Clarion*

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and indicated about an inch of space. Mr. Dimmidge's face fell.

"I want it bigger—in large letters, like a play-card," he said. "That's no good for a warning."

"You can have half a column or a whole column if you like," said the editor airily.

"I'll take a whole one," said Mr. Dimmidge simply.

The editor laughed. "Why! it would cost you a hundred dollars."

"I'll take it," repeated Mr. Dimmidge.

"But," said the editor gravely, "the same notice in a small space will serve your purpose and be quite legal."

"Never you mind that, lad! It's the looks of the thing I'm arter, and not the expense. I'll take that column."

The editor called in the foreman and showed him the copy. "Can you display that so as to fill a column?"

The foreman grasped the situation promptly. It would be big business for the paper. "Yes," he said meditatively, "that bold-faced election type will do it."

Mr. Dimmidge's face brightened. The expression "bold-faced" pleased him. "That's it! I told you. I want to bill her in a portion of the paper."

"I might put in a cut," said the foreman suggestively; "something like this." He took a venerable woodcut from the case. I grieve to say it was one which, until the middle of the present century, was common enough in the newspaper offices in the South-west. It showed the running figure of a negro woman carrying her personal property in a knotted handkerchief slung from a stick over her shoulder, and was supposed to represent "a fugitive slave."

Mr. Dimmidge's eyes brightened. "I'll take that, too. It's a little dark-complected for Mrs. D., but it will do. Now roon away, lad," he said to the foreman as he quietly pushed him into the outer office again and closed the door. Then facing the surprised editor he said, "Theer's another notiss I want ye to put in your paper; but that's atween *us*. Not a word to *them*," he indicated the banished foreman with a jerk of his thumb. "*Sabe?* I want you to put this in another part o' your paper, quite innocent-like, ye know." He drew from his pocket a grey wallet, and taking out a slip of paper read from it gravely, "'If this should meet the eye of R. B., look out for M. J. D. He is on your track. When this you see write a line to E. J. D., Elktown Post Office.' I want this to go in as 'Personal and Private'—*sabe?*—like them notisses in the big 'Frisco papers."

"I see," said the editor, laying it aside. "It shall go in the same issue in another column."

Apparently Mr. Dimmidge expected something more than this reply, for after a moment's hesitation he said with an odd smile—

"Ye ain't seein' the meanin' o' that, lad?"

"No," said the editor lightly; "but I suppose R. B. does, and it isn't intended that anyone else should."

"Mebbee it is, and mebbee it isn't," said Mr. Dimmidge with a self-satisfied air. "I don't mind saying atween us that R. B. is the man as I've suspicioned as havin' something to do with my wife goin' away; and ye see, if he writes to E. J. D.—that's my wife's initials—at Elktown, *I'll* get that letter and so make sure."

"But suppose your wife goes there first, or sends?"

"Then I'll ketch her or her messenger. Ye see?"

The editor did not see fit to oppose any argument to this phenomenal simplicity, and Mr. Dimmidge, after settling his bill with the foreman, and enjoining the editor to the strictest secrecy regarding the origin of the "personal notice," took up his gun and departed, leaving the treasury of the *Clarion* unprecedentedly enriched and the editor to his proofs.

The paper duly appeared the next morning with the column advertisement, the personal notice, and the weighty editorial on the wagon road. There was a singular demand for the paper, the edition was speedily exhausted, and the editor was proportionately flattered, although he was surprised to receive neither praise nor criticism from his subscribers. Before evening, however, he learned to his astonishment that the excitement was caused by the column advertisement. Nobody knew Mr. Dimmidge, nor his domestic infelicities, and the editor and foreman, being equally in the dark, took refuge in a mysterious and impressive evasion of all inquiry. Never since the last San Francisco Vigilance Committee had the office been so besieged. The editor, foreman, and even the apprentice, were button-holed and "treated" at the bar, but to no effect. All that could be learned was that it was a *bonâ fide* advertisement, for which one hundred dollars had been received! There were great discussions and conflicting theories as to whether the value of the wife, or the

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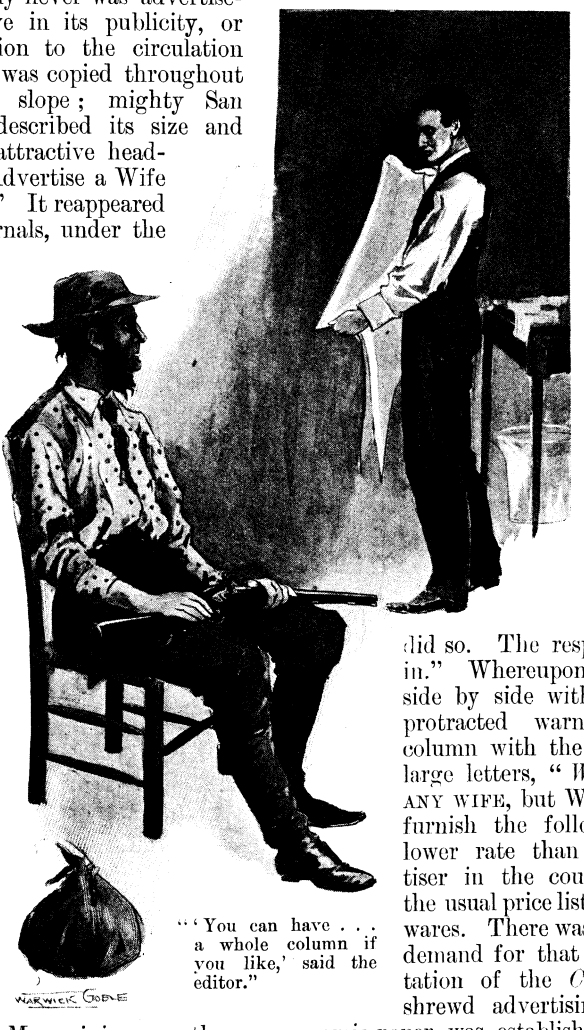
husband's anxiety to get rid of her, justified the enormous expense and ostentatious display. She was supposed to be an exceedingly beautiful woman by some, by others a perfect Sycorax; in one breath Mr. Dimmidge was a weak, uxorious spouse, wasting his substance on a creature who didn't care for him, and in another a maddened, distracted, henpecked man, content to purchase peace and rest at any price. Certainly never was advertisement more effective in its publicity, or cheaper in proportion to the circulation it commanded. It was copied throughout the whole Pacific slope; mighty San Francisco papers described its size and setting under the attractive headline, "How they Advertise a Wife in the Mountains!" It reappeared in the Eastern journals, under the title of "Whimsicalities of the Western Press." It was believed to have crossed to England as a specimen of "Transatlantic Savagery." The real editor of the *Clarion* awoke one morning, in San Francisco, to find his paper famous. Its advertising columns were eagerly sought for—he at once advanced the rates. People bought successive issues, to gaze upon this monumental record of extravagance. A singular idea, which, however, brought further fortune to the paper, was advanced by an astute critic at the Eureka Saloon. "My opinion, gentlemen, is that the whole blamed thing is a bluff! There ain't no Mr. Dimmidge; there ain't no Mrs. Dimmidge; there ain't no desertion! The whole rotten thing is an *advertisement* o' suthin'! Ye'll find afore ye get through with it that that there wife won't come back until that blamed husband buys Somebody's Soap, or treats her to Somebody's partickler Starch or Patent Medicine! Ye jest watch and see!" The idea was startling, and seized upon the mercantile mind. The principal merchant of the town, and purveyor to the mining settlements beyond, appeared the next morning at the office of the *Clarion*. "Ye wouldn't mind puttin' this 'ad.' in a column alongside o' the Dimmidge one, would ye?" The young editor glanced at it, and then, with a serpent-like sagacity, veiled, however, by the suavity of the dove, pointed out that the original advertiser might think it called his *bona fides* into question and withdraw his advertisement. "But if we secured you by an offer of double the amount per column?" urged the merchant. "That," responded the *locum tenens*, "was for the actual editor and proprietor in San Francisco to determine. He would telegraph." He did so. The response was, "Put it in." Whereupon in the next issue, side by side with Mr. Dimmidge's protracted warning, appeared a column with the announcement, in large letters, "*WE* HAVEN'T LOST ANY WIFE, but WE are prepared to furnish the following goods at a lower rate than any other advertiser in the county," followed by the usual price list of the merchant's wares. There was an unprecedented demand for that issue. The reputation of the *Clarion*, both as a shrewd advertising medium and a comic paper, was established at once. For a few days the editor waited with some apprehension for a remonstrance from the absent Dimmidge, but none came. Whether Mr. Dimmidge recognised that this new advertisement gave extra publicity to his own, or that he was already on the track of the fugitive, the editor did not know. The few curious citizens who had, early in the excitement, penetrated the settlement of the



"'You can have . . . a whole column if you like,' said the editor."

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English miners twenty miles away in search of information, found that Mr. Dimmidge had gone away, and that Mrs. Dimmidge had *never* resided there with him!

Six weeks passed. The limit of Mr. Dimmidge's advertisement had been reached; and, as it was not renewed, it had passed out of the pages of the *Clarion*, and with it the merchant's advertisement in the next column. The excitement had subsided, although its influence was still felt in the circulation of the paper and its advertising popularity. The temporary editor was also nearing the limit of his incumbency, but had so far participated in the good fortune of the *Clarion* as to receive an offer from one of the San Francisco dailies.

It was a warm night, and he was alone in his sanctum. The rest of the building was dark and deserted, and his solitary light, flashing out through the open window, fell upon the nearer pines and was lost in the dark, indefinable slope below. He had reached the sanctum by the rear, and a door which he also left open to enjoy the freshness of the aromatic air. Nor did it in the least mar his privacy. Rather the solitude of the great woods without seemed to enter through that door and encompassed him with its protecting loneliness. There was occasionally a faint "peep" in the scant eaves, or a "pat-pat" ending in a frightened scurry across the roof, or the slow flap of a heavy wing in the darkness below. These gentle disturbances did not, however, interrupt his work on "The True Functions of the County Newspaper," the editorial on which he was engaged.

Presently a more distinct rustling against the straggling blackberry bushes beside the door attracted his attention. It was followed by a light tapping against the side of the house. The editor started and turned quickly towards the open door. Two outside steps led to the ground. Standing upon the lower one was a woman. The upper part of her figure, illuminated by the light from the door, was thrown into greater relief by the dark background of the pines. Her face was unknown to him, but it was a pleasant one, marked by a certain good-humoured determination.

"May I come in?" she said confidently.

"Certainly," said the editor. "I am working here alone because it is so quiet." He thought he would precipitate some explanation from her by excusing himself.

"That's the reason why I came," she said, with a quiet smile.

She came up the next step and entered the room. She was plainly but neatly dressed, and now that her figure was revealed he saw that she was wearing a linsey-wolsey riding skirt, and carried a serviceable raw-hide whip in her cotton gauntleted hand. She took the chair he offered her and sat down sideways on it, her whip hand now also holding up her skirt and permitting a hem of clean white petticoat and a smart, well-shaped boot to be seen.

"I don't remember to have had the pleasure of seeing you in Calaveras before," said the editor tentatively.

"No. I never was here before," she said composedly, "but you've heard enough of me, I reckon. I'm Mrs. Dimmidge." She threw one hand over the back of the chair and with the other tapped her riding-whip on the floor.

The editor started. Mrs. Dimmidge! Then she was not a myth. An absurd similarity between her attitude with the whip and her husband's entrance with his gun six weeks before forced itself upon him and made her an invincible presence.

"Then you have returned to your husband?" he said hesitatingly.

"Not much!" she returned, with a slight curl of her lip.

"But you read his advertisement?"

"I saw that column of fool nonsense he put in your paper—ef that's what you mean," she said with decision, "but I didn't come here to see *him*—but *you*."

The editor looked at her with a forced smile, but a vague misgiving. He was alone at night in a deserted part of the settlement, with a plump, self-possessed woman who had a contralto voice, a horsewhip and—he could not help feeling—an evident grievance.

"To see me?" he repeated, with a faint attempt at gallantry. "You are paying me a great compliment, but really——"

"When I tell you I've come three thousand miles from Kansas straight here without stopping, ye kin reckon it's so," she replied firmly.

"Three thousand miles!" echoed the editor wonderingly.

"Yes. Three thousand miles from my own folks' home in Kansas, where six years ago I married Mr. Dimmidge—a British furriner as could scarcely make himself understood in any Christian language! Well, he got round me and dad, allowin' he was an reg'lar out and out profeshnal miner—had lived in mines ever since he was a boy; and so, not knowin' what kind o' mines, and dad

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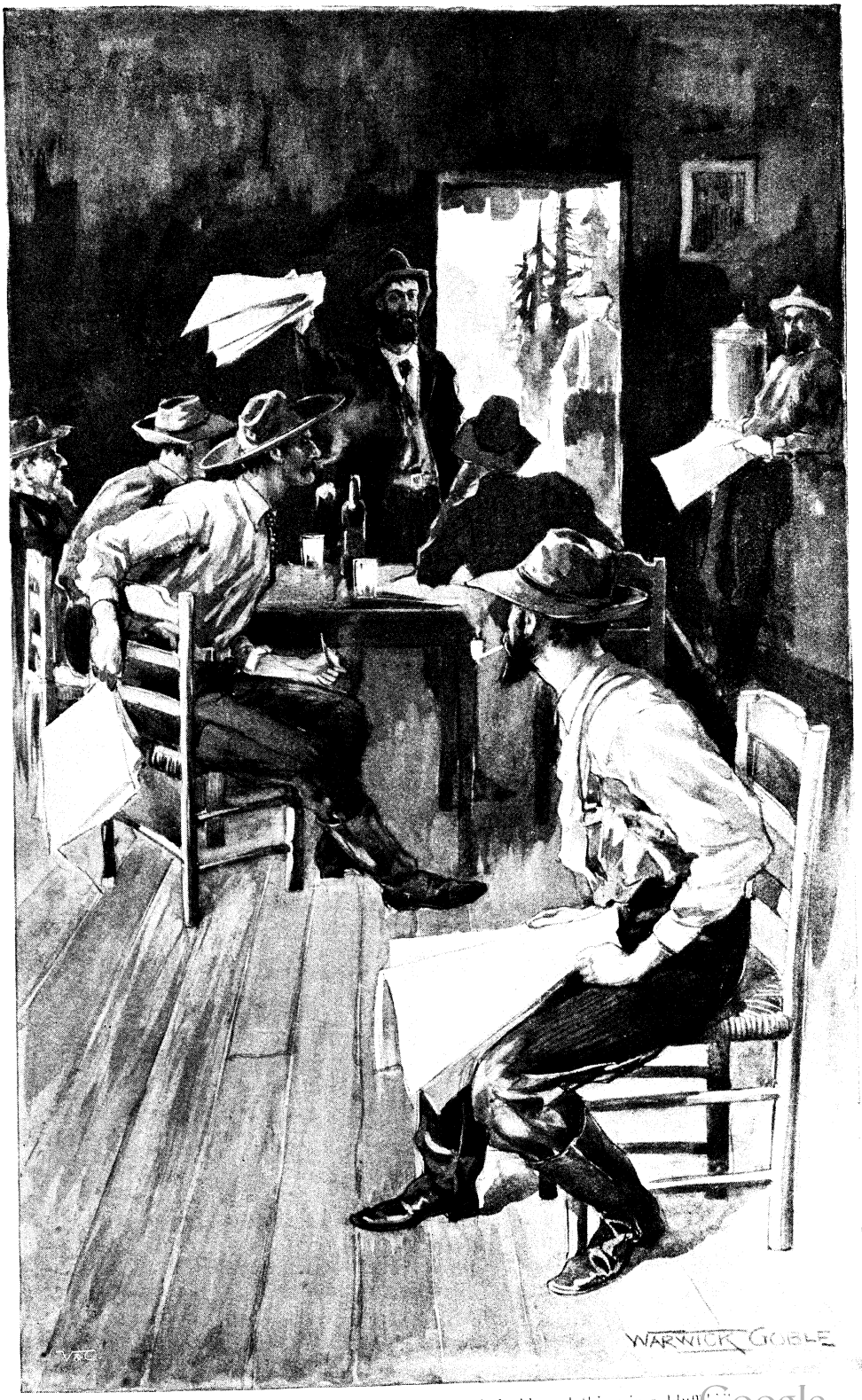

"My opinion, gentlemen, is that the whole blamed thing is a bluff."

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just bilin' over with the gold fever, we were married and kem across the plains to Californy. He was a good enough man to look at, but it warn't three months before I discovered that he allowed a wife was no better nor a nigger slave, and he the master. That made me open my eyes; but then, as he didn't drink, and didn't gamble, and didn't swear, and was a good provider and laid by money, why I shifted along with him as best I could. We drifted down the first year to Sonora, at Red Dog, where there wasn't another woman. Well, I did the nigger slave business—never stirring out o' the settlement, never seein' a town or a crowd o' decent people—and he did the lord and master! We played that game for two years, and I got tired. But when at last he allowed he'd go up to Elktown Hill, where there was a passel o' his own countrymen at work—with never a sign o' any other folks, and leave me alone at Red Dog until he fixed up a place for me at Elktown Hill—I kicked! I gave him fair warning! I did as other nigger slaves did—I ran away!"

"'I can promise you that the secret is safe with me.'"

A recollection of the wretched woodcut which Mr. Dimmidge had selected to personify his wife flashed upon the editor with a new meaning. Yet perhaps she had not seen it, and had only read a copy of the advertisement. What could she want? The *Calaveras Clarion*, although a "Palladium" and a "Sentinel upon the Heights of Freedom" in reference to wagon roads, was not a redresser of domestic wrongs—except through its advertising columns! Her next words intensified that suggestion.

"I've come here to put an advertisement in your paper."

The editor heaved a sigh of relief, as once before. "Certainly," he said briskly. "But that's another department of the paper, and the printers have gone home. Come to-morrow morning early."

"To-morrow morning I shall be miles away," she said decisively, "and what I want done has got to be done *now!* I don't want to see no printers; I don't want *anybody* to know I've been here but you. That's why I kem here at night, and rode all the way from Sawyer's Station, and wouldn't take the stage coach. And when we've settled about the advertisement, I'm going to mount my horse, out thar in the bushes, and scoot outer the settlement."

"Very good," said the editor resignedly.

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"Of course I can deliver your instructions to the foreman. And now—let me see—I suppose you wish to intimate in a personal notice to your husband that you've returned."

"Nothin' o' the kind!" said Mrs. Dimmidge coolly. "I want to placard him as he did me. I've got it all written out here. *Sabe?*"

She took from her pocket a folded paper, and spreading it out on the editor's desk, with a certain pride of authorship read as follows:—

"Whereas my husband, Micah J. Dimmidge, having given out that I have left his bed and board—the same being a bunk in a log cabin and pork and molasses three times a day—and having advertised that he'd pay no debts of *my* contractin'—which, as thar ain't any, might be easier collected than debts of his own contractin'—this is to certify that unless he returns from Elktown Hill to his only home in Sonora in one week from date, payin' the costs of this advertisement, I'll know the reason why.—Eliza Jane Dimmidge."

"Thar," she added, drawing a long breath, "put that in a column of the *Clarion*, same size as the last, and let it work, and that's all I want of you."

"A column?" repeated the editor. "Do you know the cost is very expensive, and I *could* put it in a single paragraph."

"I reckon I kin pay the same as Mr. Dimmidge did for *his*," said the lady complacently. "I didn't see your paper myself, but the paper as copied it—one of them big New York dailies—said that it took up a whole column."

The editor breathed more freely; she had not seen the infamous woodcut which her husband had selected. At the same moment he was struck with a sense of retribution, justice, and compensation.

"Would you—" he asked hesitatingly, "would you like it illustrated—by a cut?"

"With which?"

"Wait a moment, I'll show you."

He went into the dark composing room, lit a candle, and rummaging in a drawer sacred to weather-beaten, old-fashioned electrotyped advertising symbols of various trades, finally selected one and brought it to Mrs. Dimmidge. It represented a bare and exceedingly stalwart arm wielding a large hammer.

"Your husband being a miner—a quartz miner—would that do?" he asked. (It had been previously used to advertise a blacksmith, a gold-beater, and a stonemason.)

The lady examined it critically.

"It does look a little like Micah's arm," she said meditatively. "Well—you kin put it in."

The editor was so well pleased with his success that he must needs make another suggestion. "I suppose," he said ingenuously, "that you don't want to answer the 'Personal'?"

"'Personal'?" she repeated quickly, "what's that? I ain't seen no 'Personal.'"

The editor saw his blunder. She, of course, had never seen Mr. Dimmidge's artful "Personal"; *that* the big dailies naturally had not noticed nor copied. But it was too late to withdraw now. He brought out a file of the *Clarion*, and snipping out the paragraph with his scissors, laid it before the lady.

She stared at it with wrinkled brows and a darkening face.

"And *this* was in the same paper?—put in by Mr. Dimmidge?" she asked breathlessly.

The editor, somewhat alarmed, stammered, "Yes." But the next moment he was reassured. The wrinkles disappeared, a dozen dimples broke out where they had been, and the determined, matter-of-fact Mrs. Dimmidge burst into a fit of rosy merriment. Again and again she laughed, shaking the building, startling the sedate, melancholy woods beyond, until the editor himself laughed in sheer vacant sympathy.

"Lordy!" she said at last, gasping and wiping the laughter from her wet eyes. "I never thought of *that*."

"No," explained the editor smilingly; "of course you didn't. Don't you see, the papers that copied the big advertisement never saw that little paragraph, or if they did, they never connected the two together."

"Oh, it ain't *that*," said Mrs. Dimmidge, trying to regain her composure and holding her sides. "It's that blessed *dear* old dunderhead of a Dimmidge I'm thinking of. That gets me. I see it all now. Only, sakes alive! I never thought *that* of him. Oh, it's just too much!" and she again relapsed behind her handkerchief.

"Then I suppose you don't want to reply to it," said the editor.

Her laughter instantly ceased. "Don't I?" she said, wiping her face into its previous complacent determination. "Well, young man, I reckon that's just what I *want* to do! Now, wait a moment; let's see what he said," she went on, taking up and reperusing the "Personal" paragraph. "Well,

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then," she went on, after a moment's silent composition with moving lips, "you just put these lines in."

The editor took up his pencil.

"To Mr. J. D. Dimmidge.—Hope you're still on R. B.'s tracks. Keep there!—E. J. D."

The editor wrote down the line, and then, remembering Mr. Dimmidge's voluntary explanation of *his* "Personal," waited with some confidence for a like frankness from Mrs. Dimmidge. But he was mistaken.

"You think that he—R. B.—or Mr. Dimmidge will understand this?" he at last asked tentatively. "Is it enough?"

"Quite enough," said Mrs. Dimmidge emphatically. She took a roll of greenbacks from her pocket, selected a hundred dollar bill and then a five, and laid them before the editor. "Young man," she said with a certain demure gravity, "you've done me a heap o' good. I never spent money with more satisfaction than this. I never thought much o' the 'power o' the Press,' as you call it, afore. But this has been a right comfortable visit, and I'm glad I ketched you alone. But you understand one thing: this yer visit, and *who* I am, is betwixt you and me only."

"Of course I must say that the advertisement was *authorised*," returned the editor. "I'm only the temporary editor. The proprietor is away."

"So much the better," said the lady complacently. "You just say you found it on your desk with the money; but don't you give me away."

"I can promise you that the secret of your personal visit is safe with me," said the young man, with a bow, as Mrs. Dimmidge rose. "Let me see you to your horse," he added. "It's quite dark in the woods."

"I can see well enough alone, and it's just as well as you shouldn't know *how* I kem or *how* I went away. Enough for you to know that I'll be miles away before that paper comes out. So stay where you are."

She pressed his hand frankly and firmly, gathered up her riding skirt, slipped backwards to the door, and the next moment rustled away into the darkness.

Early the next morning the editor handed Mrs. Dimmidge's advertisement and the woodcut he had selected to his foreman. He was purposely brief in his directions, so as to avoid inquiry, and retired to his sanctum. In the space of a few moments the foreman entered with a slight embarrassment of manner.

"You'll excuse my speaking to you, sir," he said, with a singular mixture of humility and cunning. "It's no business of mine, I know; but I thought I ought to tell you that this yer kind o' thing won't pay any more—it's about played out!"

"I don't think I understand you," said the editor loftily, but with an inward misgiving. "You don't mean to say that a regular, actual advertisement——"

"Of course, I know all that," said the foreman with a peculiar smile; "and I'm ready to back you up in it, and so's the boy; but it won't pay."

"It *has* paid a hundred and five dollars," said the editor, taking the notes from his pocket; "so I'd advise you to simply attend to your duty and set it up."

A look of surprise, followed, however, by a kind of pitying smile, passed over the foreman's face. "Of course, sir, *that's* all right, and you know your own business; but if you think that the new advertisement will pay this time as the other one did, and whoop up another column from an advertiser, I'm afraid you'll slip up. It's a little 'off colour' now—not 'up to date'—if it ain't a regular 'back number,' as you'll see."

"Meantime I'll dispense with your advice," said the editor curtly, "and I think you had better let our subscribers and advertisers do the same, or the *Clarion* might also be obliged to dispense with your *services*."

"I ain't no blab," said the foreman in an aggrieved manner, "and I don't intend to give the show away even if it don't *pay*. But I thought I'd tell you, because I know the folks round here better than you do."

He was right. No sooner had the advertisement appeared than the editor found that everybody believed it to be a sheer invention of his own to "once more boom" the *Clarion*. If they had doubted *Mr.* Dimmidge they utterly rejected *Mrs.* Dimmidge as an advertiser! It was a stale joke that nobody would follow up; and on the heels of this came a letter from the editor-in-chief.

"My Dear Boy,—You meant well, I know, but the second Dimmidge 'ad.' was a mistake. Still, it was a big bluff of yours to show the money, and I send you back your hundred dollars, hoping you won't 'do it again.' Of course you'll have to keep the advertisement in the paper for two issues, just as if it were a real thing, and it's lucky that there's just now no pressure in our columns. You might have told a better

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story than that hogwash about your finding the 'ad.' and a hundred dollars lying loose on your desk one morning. It was rather thin, and I don't wonder the foreman kicked."

The young editor was in despair. At first he thought of writing to Mrs. Dimmidge at the Elktown Post Office, asking her to relieve him of his vow of secrecy; but his pride forbade. There was a humorous concern, not without a touch of pity, in the faces of his contributors as he passed; a few affected to believe in the new advertisement, and asked him vague, perfunctory questions about it. His position was trying, and he was not sorry when the term of his engagement expired the next week, and he left Calaveras to take his new position on the San Francisco paper.

He was standing in the saloon of the Sacramento boat when he felt a sudden heavy pressure on his shoulder, and, looking round sharply, beheld, not only the black-bearded face of Mr. Dimmidge, lit up by a smile, but beside it the beaming, buxom face of Mrs. Dimmidge, overflowing with good humour. Still a little sore from his past experience, he was about to address them abruptly, when he was utterly vanquished by the hearty pressure of their hands and the unmistakable look of gratitude in their eyes.

"I was just saying to 'Lizy Jane," began Mr. Dimmidge breathlessly, "if I could only meet that young man o' the *Clarion* what brought us together again——"

"You'd be willin' to pay four times the amount we both paid him," interpolated the laughing Mrs. Dimmidge.

"But I didn't bring you together," burst out the dazed young man, "and I'd like to know, in the name of Heaven, what brought you together now?"

"Don't you see, lad," said the imperturbable Mr. Dimmidge, "'Lizy Jane and myself had qua'lled, and we just unpacked our fool nonsense in your paper and let the hull world know it! And we both felt kinder skeert and shamed like, and it looked such small hogwash, and of so little account, for all the talk it made, that we kinder felt lonely as two separated fools that really ought to share their foolishness together."

"And that ain't all," said Mrs. Dimmidge, with a sly glance at her spouse, "for I found out from that 'Personal' you showed me that this partickler old fool was actooally jealous!—*jealous!*"

"And then?" said the editor impatiently.

"And then I *knew* he loved me all the time."

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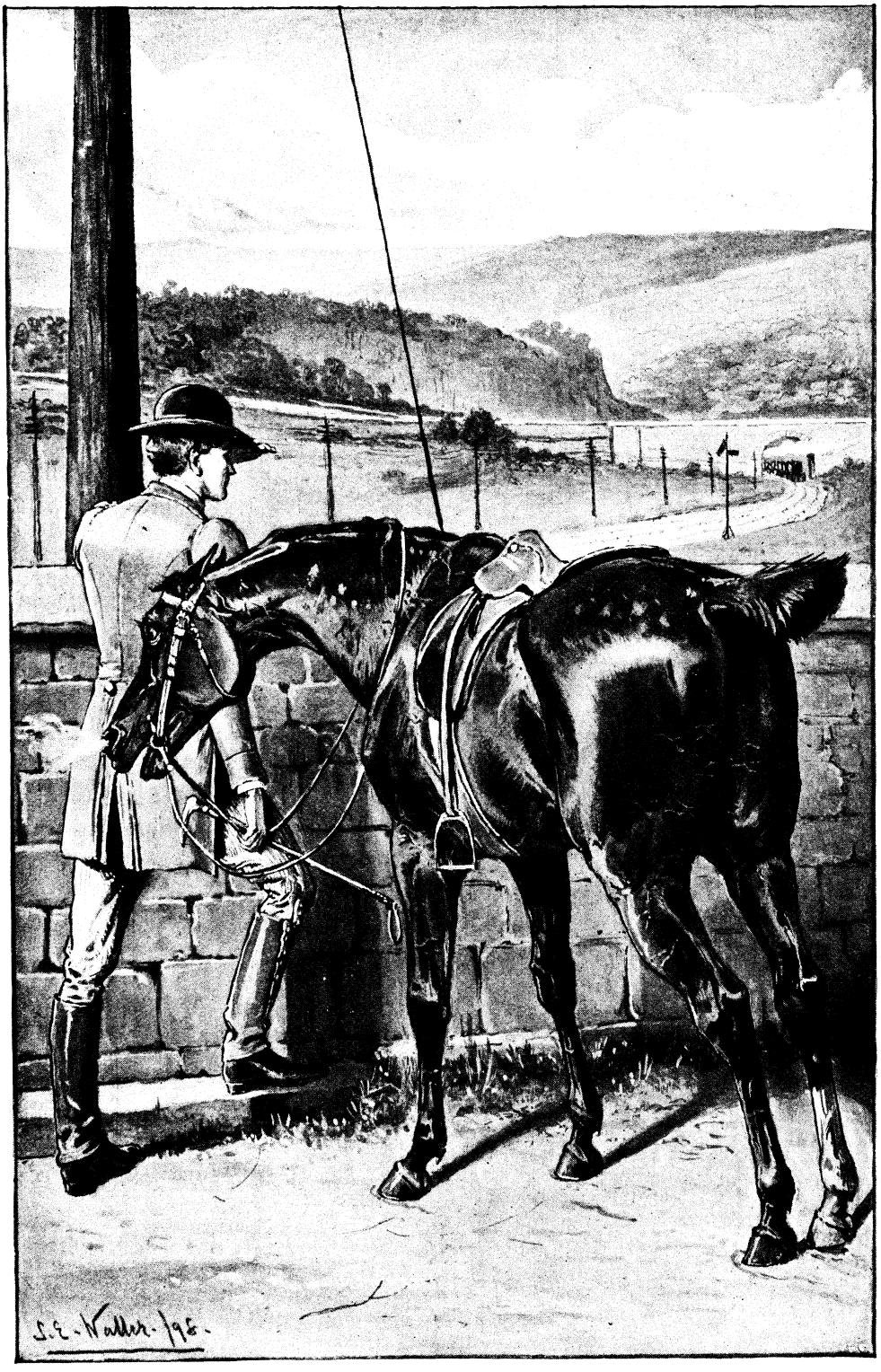

"Too Late!"

From the Picture by S. E. Waller.

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THE SECRET OF LONG LIFE,

AS REVEALED BY FAMOUS LIVING VETERANS AND RECORDED BY FRED. A. McKENZIE.*

PART II.

With Contributions from, or Interviews with, the BISHOP OF LIVERPOOL, the BISHOP OF LLANDAFF, SIR THEODORE MARTIN, SIR CHARLES GAVAN DUFFY, PROFESSOR VIRCHOW, MRS. ELIZABETH CADY STANTON, MRS. KEELEY, PROFESSOR GOLDWIN SMITH, MR. T. SIDNEY COOPER, MR. W. P. FRITH, MR. SIMS REEVES, MR. CHARLES SALAMAN, and DR. CUYLER.

THE symposium in a recent number of the WINDSOR, on the important subject of the secret of long life, aroused a very considerable interest by reason of its valuable fragments of autobiography bearing upon the question as solved by some of the most famous of living men and women of exceptionally advanced years. The present article forms an important supplement to its predecessor in recording the views of another representative group of notable veterans, whose interesting communications were received too late to be chronicled in our Christmas number.

MR. T. SIDNEY COOPER, R.A.
Photo by Ball, Regent Street, W.

Two of the best known nonagenarians in England to-day are Mr. Sidney Cooper, R.A., the Father of English painters, and Mrs. Keeley, the Mother of the Drama. Mr. Sidney Cooper, now in his ninety-sixth year, still constantly labours at fresh landscape and animal studies: and his work remains that of a man in his prime. The tremors, the absence of exact definition, which almost always affect the work of any artist of very advanced years, are not to be found by the most captious critic in Mr. Cooper's pictures. I am indebted to Mr. Cooper for the following bit of autobiography.

"I was born in 1803, during the great Imperial War, which lasted till I was twelve years of age. All provisions were very dear, and my early life was spent on very plain food. So soon as I was able, I got to hard work, for little pay. I took every opportunity to try to draw and sketch from Nature; but as I could not get instruction this caused me to walk much daily. I have been a great walker. At twenty years of age I was able to learn drawing at county schools, which gave me a great number of miles to walk. I never was ill, except with infant maladies. At thirty I commenced to try to paint. After I came to settle in London my living was of a very careful kind. I soon became known, and received many commissions for my work, which became very popular. Then came a period of bad health from the over-strain of London life, and I feared I should become a poor invalid. So I went back to the country, bought some land and built this house—Vernon Holme, near Canterbury—in 1848. I soon felt the change for the better. I bought a farm, which required much looking after, and I commenced to walk again. This I continued to do; and now, in my ninety-sixth year, I can paint four or five hours a day, and walk slowly a mile, daily, in fine weather, or take a carriage drive if not fine. I rise at seven o'clock, go into my study, set my palette, take my breakfast at eight, then my Bible, then I paint till twelve-thirty. Then lunch and Bible, and paint till three o'clock. This is my day's work, and then I take my walk, write letters, and dine at six o'clock. I take no wine, but a very little whisky and cold water. I generally sleep well and am not much troubled with illness.

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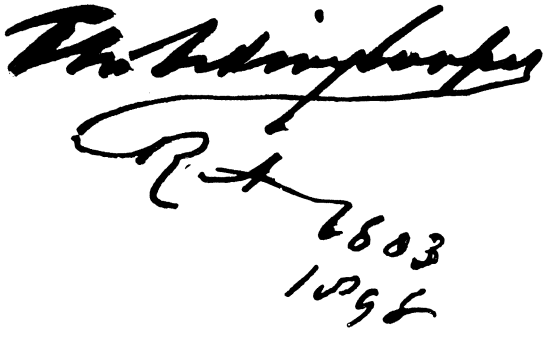
Of course I have the infirmities of old age, but now enjoy the cheerful effects of a temperate life.

"I think moderate smoking conducive to sleep, if in the evening; but to smoke all day, as I know some do, is not wise.

"I must tell you that I attribute my long life to the merciful care of God's Providence, for he was the Father of the fatherless boy, and has preserved him through all his trials and difficulties, prosperities, sunshine and shadow."

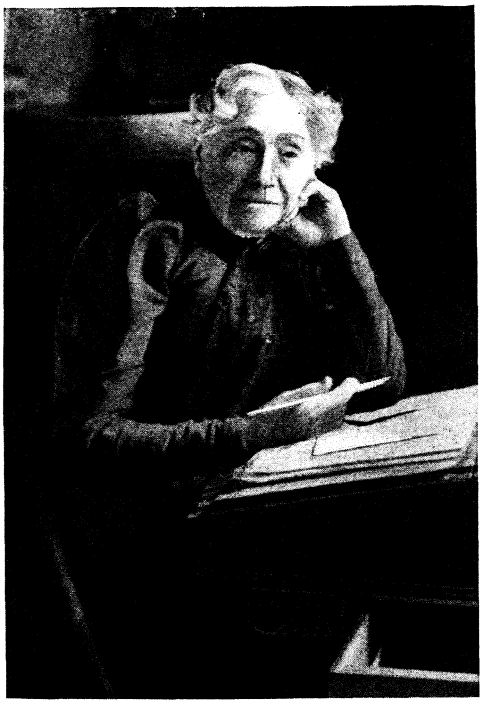


It is hard, when one is talking with Mrs. Keeley, the mother of the English stage, to realise that she is ninety-three years old. Bright, high-spirited, merry, her sanguine and optimistic outlook on life puts to shame the gloomy mopings of us younger folks. An accident to her leg when she was seventy-nine prevents her moving about much; but though she cannot now go freely out to the world, the world comes to her, in her cheerful Kensington home.

"It is impossible to say what has led to my living so long," Mrs. Keeley told me one winter afternoon. "I was the eldest of eight; all the others have died, and I alone am left. But who can say why? I have no set rules for my manner of life, and perhaps the only care I have taken is to be very moderate in everything. I have always been a very small eater, and have not taken too much sleep. After our work at the theatre was over, Mr. Keeley and I never went out to supper, but would come straight back home, and in summer days I would be up at five in the morning, out in my garden. I love the open air and outdoor life.

"But if you come to me and ask me how you, too, can live long, I say that I cannot tell you. All I can say is, live simply and quietly and regularly. I have a distaste for drink of any kind whatever, not only intoxicating drinks, but liquids of any sort. It is almost a punishment for me to drink wine, while champagne——" and Mrs. Keeley made a grimace and shook her head with an attitude more expressive than words. "Recently I have been taking a glass of wine a day, just to oblige my doctor, but after doing it a week or two I had to stop."

Mrs. Keeley still maintains her interest in all that is going on. She sees to her own business affairs, she is a great reader, and she stoutly declares that life is growing healthier as the years go on, and that mankind has better days before it than behind.



MRS. KEELEY.
Photo by Russell and Sons, Baker Street, W.

"Some time ago," said Mr. W. P. Frith, R.A., to me, "a number of old men were comparing notes as to their ways of life. They differed altogether about food, drink, and almost every habit. What one recommended others declared quite wrong. But there was one point in which they

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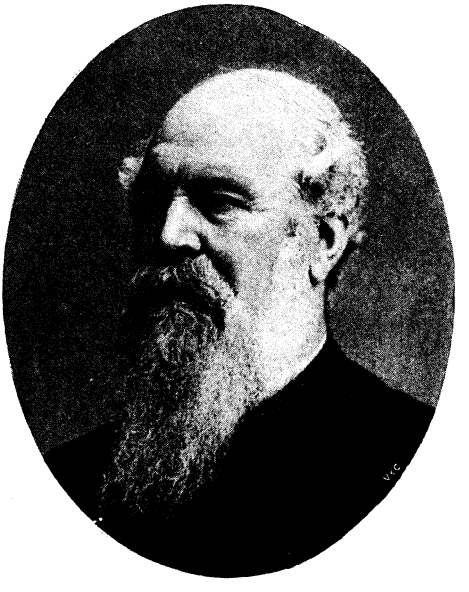
were unanimous. They all were emphatic about the necessity of spending a considerable portion of each day taking exercise in the open air. I believe that open air life is one of the greatest aids to long life, though, of course, nothing will lead to many years unless Nature has given the person the foundation to start with. For myself, I still walk my four miles a day, though I am in my eightieth year, and I still work actively. My friends tell me I paint as well as ever, but I am afraid they only say that to please me; for I know that most of us do lose our earlier skill as years go on. I have known old men show me fearful daubs, and sincerely declare they were the best work they had ever produced. I remember once, many years ago, when I was on the Hanging Committee of the Royal Academy, an old Academician sent two pictures to be hung. You know that the laws of the Academy compel us to hang the pictures of Academicians. But one of these pictures was so awful that it would have aroused endless ridicule. What were we to do? The old gentleman believed that it was splendid work, but the figures were formless, the colouring unbearable. After much hesitation we resolved that the best thing we could do was quietly to put it on one side and say nothing to anyone about it. But I think of that picture when my friends praise my work now that I am old, and I remember that old men often think they are doing their best when the truth is that they are blind to their own defects."

MR. W. P. FRITH, R.A.
Photo by Window and Grove, Baker Street, W.

Modest words, indeed, from one whose paintings were for long the most popular and eagerly demanded of any in England. Mr. Frith remains fresh, active, and industrious. "I still find my chief recreation in my work," he told me. "Painting never wearies me, and I come to my studio at ten in the morning, and often remain at work so long as the light lasts. Throughout my life I have found in my work my greatest pleasure. My habits of life have been simple. I have not gone in for playing tricks with myself. I have had no rules about eating. An old friend of mine might tell you, if you asked him the secret of his old age, 'Porridge, porridge.' I sometimes tell him that if old age can only be had by living on porridge, I prefer a short life. In eating, I make a very good breakfast, thus starting the day well; but take very little lunch, merely some soup or the like. I take no afternoon tea, but dinner early in the evening. I find that a little whisky after dinner helps the digestion, though I am strongly against the use of drink in any quantity. In painting, in particular, drinking is sooner or later fatal to good work. Show me a picture, and I can tell you at a glance whether the painter is a heavy drinker or not. If he is, all of the



THE RIGHT REV. DR. RYLE, BISHOP OF LIVERPOOL.
Photo by Elliott and Fry, Baker Street, W.

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delicate touches, the fine effects, will be shaky and blotched. His nerve has gone. I once knew a man whose hand grew so shaky through drinking that when he wanted to paint he had to grasp the right wrist with his left hand, to steady it. Most painters, however, find that their hand grows less steady as the years come on. The one great exception I know to this is my old friend Mr. Sidney Cooper. To-day, at ninety-five, his hand is as sure as that of a young man."

From Art let us turn to the Churches. Dr. Ryle, Bishop of Liverpool, who, though eighty-two, still keeps firm hand over his own diocese, and makes his influence felt throughout the Church, writes as follows :—

"I am eighty-two, and am still able to preach and attend to a bishop's duties. I have never had any special illness, and I have never lived by any special rule of life. Before twenty-five I used to take a great deal of exercise. I have never been a smoker."

THE RIGHT REV. DR. LEWIS, BISHOP OF LLANDAFF.
Photo by Russell and Sons, Baker Street, W.

From Dr. Lewis, the veteran Bishop of Llandaff, I have received the following :—

"So long as it pleases God to continue to a man, with length of days, a sufficiency of health and strength to enable him to discharge his duties without pain and wearying, so long I believe old age to be desirable. I do not believe that in all cases the burden of life necessarily increases as a man attains the age of threescore and ten, although doubtless in many cases such is the case, and in some at a much earlier period of life.

"I have not observed any special rules about food or drink beyond the rule of moderation. I am no smoker. I have always been an early riser, and what work I have been enabled to do has been done in the morning, much of it before breakfast. I have led a physically active life, and much of the earlier part of it was spent in the open air. I am not a total abstainer, but for some time past have used stimulants very sparingly, and my own experience leads me to believe that in most cases they are not necessary for the preservation of health."

The Rev. Dr. Theodore Cuyler, the famous American divine, writes to me from Lake Mohonk :—

"Let me say that I have no claim to longevity, being only seventy-six; and a gentleman to whom I showed your letter playfully said, 'You are the youngest man in the house.' I have been actively engaged in the ministry for fifty-two years, preaching continually. I have never spent a Sunday in bed in my life. Under a kind Providence, I owe my vigorous health to a good constitution and a careful observance of the simplest laws of health. My only physician is Doctor Prevention. I avoid all indigestible food and all alcoholic stimulants, and have never

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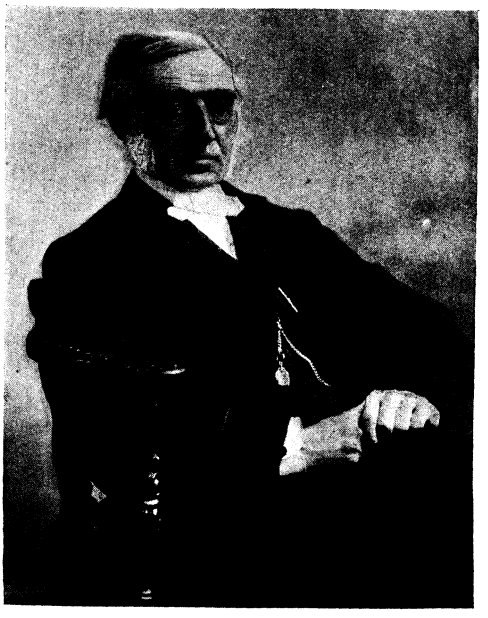
smoked a cigar. I sleep soundly (after a bountiful bowl of bread and milk before retiring), and I never drive either body or brain after I am weary. My amusements are reading, walking, and lively chats with friends, and I find that 'old age' is more a matter of temperament than of the almanack."

Theodore L Cuyler

Mrs. E. Cady Stanton is admittedly the mother of the modern New Woman Movement, and her words will be of special interest to all "new women." She writes :—

"Born of a long line of healthy ancestors, reared in a cool climate on the Mohonk Hills, a comparatively free and romping childhood in the open air on my pony, well fed, blessed with pleasant companionship—these were all helps to a good development to all those qualities of character that help to make up human happiness. I shall be eighty-three the coming November (1898), in perfect health, without aches or pains. Yes, long life is desirable if by use one has retained all the faculties of mind, and by care perfect bodily health. Never was life fuller and sweeter to me than now. I understand the true philosophy of life ; I see that we have our care and keeping in our own hands. We must each stand at the helm and guide ourselves, believing that in our own hands we hold our destiny. I have always been a great sleeper, a moderate eater, and have taken much exercise in the open air. My hearing is still good, and my teeth sound, but my eyes are dim. My mind is active. I have always had subjects of deep interest for thought and action, and am still writing every day, and have just spoken twice in the open air to a large audience on the question of women's suffrage. An active mind has much to do with health and longevity, and so has the true philosophy of life.

"I waste no energy in regrets of the past or fears for the future. The future is a sealed book, and the past cannot be remedied. I have lived in the present, bending all my energies to the duties of the hour. I attribute much of my health to being free from all superstition. I am fond of music and games. I still sing, play on the piano, and play all games, from chess to dominoes. A severe fall injured one of my ankles and has in a manner crippled my powers of locomotion. I cannot walk much, or dance with the grace or agility of early days. There, I think I have told you all about myself."



REV. THEODORE CUYLER.
Photo by Elliott and Fry, Baker Street, W.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Living in peaceful retirement in the South of France, Sir Charles Gavan Duffy can look back on one of the most venturesome and exciting careers of any politician of the Empire. A student and a man of letters, his love of his people impelled him to throw himself into the most strenuous and dangerous political work. It is common history now, how, as a young man, he stood on trial with Daniel O'Connell for seditious conspiracy ; how for months he lay in prison while the Government was trying to secure his conviction for treason-felony. Then came an active Parliamentary career, and the leadership of an Irish group at Westminster, pledged to put Ireland before party. But, between forty and fifty years ago, the times

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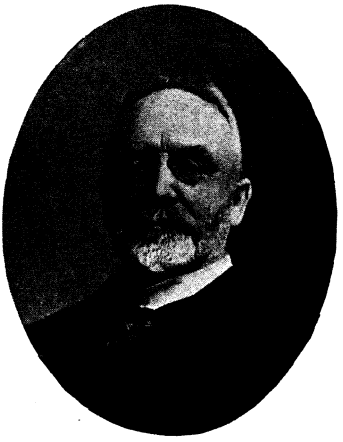
were not ripe for the methods of constitutional warfare which in the eighties were to be so effective, and it was perhaps with a feeling akin to despair that Mr. Duffy went to Victoria forty-two years ago. There he soon proved himself as fitted for constructive politics as he had formerly been fiery in opposition, and his doings as Premier, and afterwards Speaker, of the Victorian Parliament are still gratefully remembered. Of his later life the following touching and thought-arousing letter speaks :—

"I am now in my eighty-third year, and I attribute my prolonged life to a careful and systematic method of living. In boyhood and youth I suffered habitually from dyspepsia, and in early manhood I was so engrossed in political work that I gave no attention to the state of my health. At about my thirty-sixth year a great change came. I read in 'Addison's Spectator' a paper on Louis Cornaro, who preached with singular force and persuasion the necessity of obtaining constant good health to an advanced age by a strict and habitual moderation in eating and drinking. Addison describes Cornaro as an Italian gentleman of undoubted credit, who lived to be a hundred years of age by pursuing the practice he recommended. I studied his little book with great satisfaction, and it was probably about the same time I met, in Sir William Temple's works, a graphic homily on the supreme advantages of health. 'Health,' he says, 'is the soul which animates all the enjoyments of life, which fade and are tasteless without it. Without health, a man starves at the best tables, makes faces at the most delicate wines, is old and dull among the most sparkling beauties, and poor and wretched in the midst of the most splendid treasures; music grows harsh and conversation disagreeable, riches are useless, and honours and attendants cumbersome.' I determined to spare no pains to become well and vigorous. From that time I rarely or never ate to fulness or drank to elevation. I have also avoided, as far as was compatible with the business of life, studying or sitting up past midnight, or in latter years past nine o'clock, and I have always been an early riser. I have lived as much as possible in the open air, and have read for instruction or amusement, but still more for necessary rest and relaxation, some hours every day. I have never suffered from rheumatism, gout, sciatica, or any other torturing malady, and this immunity is, I think, attributable to my mode of life.



SIR CHARLES GAVAN DUFFY.
Photo by Elliott and Fry, Baker Street, W.

"You ask if life, after sixty years and ten, is a burden. I have not found it so. The most tranquil and serene period of my life was from my sixty-fourth to my seventy-second year, and so it would have continued, I think, to this day, but that two great misfortunes befell me. I lost my beloved wife, and my sight—which was not more precious to me than my wife—became seriously impaired. But, notwithstanding, I have since written two or three books, the eyesight of my daughters supplying what failed me. I do not consult a doctor on an average more than once a year, and altogether refrained from taking medicine till after my eightieth year, when some of the processes of Nature became lethargic, and needed occassional assistance. Sir Richard Steele has made a picture of old age, which is perhaps somewhat exaggerated, but it contains a much more solid basis of truth than the hypothesis suggested by your question. 'A healthy old man,' he says, 'that is not a fool, is the happiest creature living. It is at that time of life only men enjoy their faculties with pleasure and satisfaction. It is then we have nothing to manage, as the phrase is, we speak the downright truth, and whether the rest of the world will give us the privilege or not, we have so little to ask of them, that we can take it.'"

To many of us younger men Professor Goldwin Smith will ever be Master. We love to think of him as one of the inspired teachers and great prophets of the century. His mastery of the English language, his pellucid, passionate, trenchant style, would alone claim our attention, but that is his

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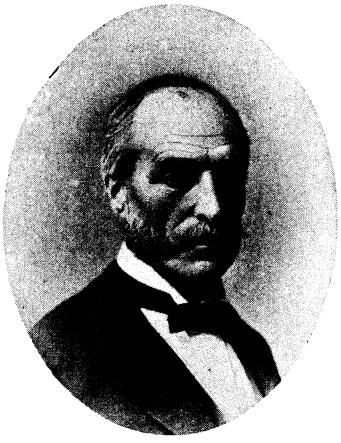
least claim. We recall his books of years ago, with their clear moral outlook, their strenuous advocacy of the right, their encouragement and hope for almost despairing strugglers with the problems of this complex life. In his old age, we are told, Professor Goldwin Smith is a pessimist. Perhaps so, but to many of us his own writings are among the best defences against pessimism.



PROFESSOR GOLDWIN SMITH.
Photo by Elliott and Fry, Baker Street, W.

Professor Goldwin Smith writes to me from Toronto :—"I am afraid that I have no secret of longevity to impart. I have never observed any particular rules of diet, except that of general moderation. I have always avoided working late at night. I have taken a good deal of outdoor exercise. When young I wandered on the Alps, went out shooting, rode with foxhounds. I perhaps owe something to having been in early boyhood at schools where work was light. In my later years I have owed a great deal to the care of a loving wife.

"To me the burden of life has not become heavy, though old age, of course, has its drawbacks, the worst of which is, perhaps, the loss of relatives and friends."

Goldwin Smith

The man who can spend an afternoon with Mr. Charles Salaman, the father of English musicians, and go away feeling anything but an optimist, must be incorrigible. The octogenarian composer, in his eighty-fifth year, is as bright, active, and full of interest in life as can be imagined. The afternoon I called on him I found him busy writing a letter of congratulation to a young actress who had made a brilliant success at the opening of a new piece the night before. He needed no glasses for his epistolary work. "I wore glasses for about fifty years," he said, "and then, when I got well into the seventies, I thought I had worn them quite long enough, so I left them off. I can still shave myself, and calculate I have performed that operation altogether about 22,600 times. I keep an interest in all my old friends, and although I cannot get about outside now like a young man, I know and rejoice over all their doings and successes." A glance at the mantelpieces and walls showed how numerous his friends are, for there were mementoes, signed portraits, and curios of or from almost every great singer or actor of the past seventy years. Here was a bill of just seventy years ago, announcing the appearance of Master C. Salaman, in 1828, at a concert where several of the leading musicians were performing ; not far off was a copy of some verses of John Davidson's translation of Coppé's "For the Crown," issued a few months ago, with music by Charles Salaman. It was hard at first to realise that the vigorous old gentleman before me had himself spanned during his working life the interval between the old concert-room of the days of George the Fourth and the *fin de siècle* Lyceum performance.

If youth is to be measured by youthfulness of heart, then Mr. Salaman is still in his teens. His musical enthusiasm remains unabated, and, fortunately, his fingers still remain supple. Most great pianists find that as the years draw on their fingers grow stiff, so that playing becomes a pain and has finally to be abandoned. With Mr. Salaman this is not so. His touch is still light and firm ; the fire, the dash, the sympathy of the great interpreter are still left. "I sit over my piano for hours," he told me. "When the darkness comes on before the lights

MR. CHARLES SALAMAN.
Photo by Elliott & Fry, Baker Street, W.

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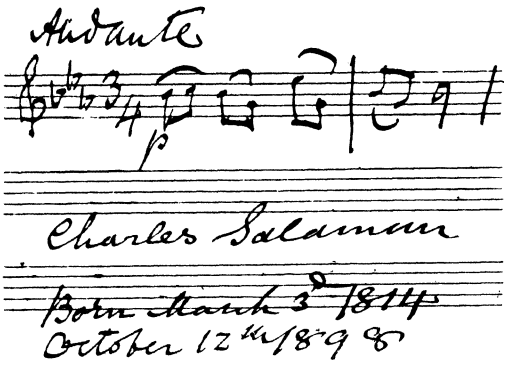
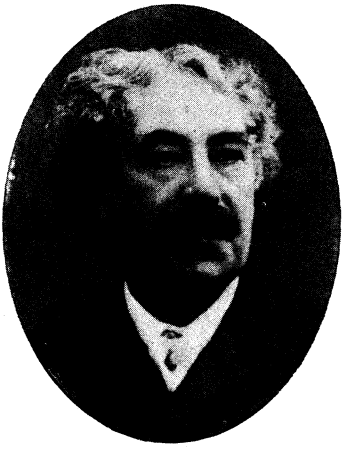
are lit, I go across to it, and improvise, and pour out my thoughts and feelings through its keys. I feel I am specially blessed in having the gift of improvisation, and in my fingers retaining their suppleness. I can still give myself expression better through the keys of my piano than even by speech."



"How have you managed it all, Mr. Salaman? How do you keep the fire and hope and joy of youth for so long unimpaired?"

"If there is any secret of doing this, it is to live simply, quietly, steadily. A few years ago, when people asked me what I lived on, I told them love and new-laid eggs. Now, I say soup and sympathy, or cocoa and comfort, for I have not eaten any solid food for a few years past. But I was never a club man, with all that club life means. Of course, I went freely about among my friends, and did not shut myself up, hermit fashion; but I did not go in for that rapid rate of living and 'about town' mode of life which wears men out sooner than anything. Then I was never a smoker. Once, it is true, I smoked half a cigar, but that experience was quite enough for me. I have not repeated it since. Abstinence is, I believe, the great secret of healthy and long life, so far as such secret can be given."

In interviewing Mr. Salaman one finds so many side points of interest that it is difficult to keep strictly to the theme. We got to talking of Queen Caroline, whom he distinctly remembered going to and returning from Westminster Abbey, at the coronation of her husband. "I can see her now," he said, "before my mind's eye, and the hurt and disappointed look on her face as she rode back from the Abbey, with Alderman Wood by her side, after the door had been shut in her face and she was refused permission to enter."



MR. SIMS REEVES.
Photo by Larrauds, Oxford Street, W.

Then our talk turned to music, and Mr. Salaman went to his piano and played song after song, Greek, Hebrew, Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, down to the love song of the hour. He has written songs in seven or eight languages. "Tire me?" he repeated, when I said I feared the playing might be too much for him. "No, my piano never tires me. To play it is rest and recreation. I still compose a love song for each birthday, and last March, when I reached eighty-four, I composed two specially to celebrate the occasion." And as I left I could not help feeling that here was evening without shadow, or, at least, with only one shade—the loss, not long since, of a beloved partner.

"I was singing last night for a charitable concert," Mr. Sims Reeves told me, "and at the end someone came to me and said, 'Mr. Reeves, I heard you sing in public fifty years ago.' It seems a long time to look back on, 1848."

"Especially when we remember, Mr. Reeves, that from then to now you have spent your life in giving constant delight to at least two generations of men."

I picked up a letter which had just come in, and, strangely enough, it bore on the same thing. "I cannot help thanking you for the extreme pleasure your singing gave me last Saturday," an old admirer wrote. "I had the great delight of hearing you sing in 1849."

"How is it, Mr. Reeves, that you have been able to give yourself to the public for over fifty years? How have you managed to conserve strength and vigour?"

"That is not a question to be answered in a moment," Mr. Reeves replied; "but I believe the great cause, not only in my own case, but in nearly every instance, is constitution. The man who has a good, sound constitution, and no functional disorders, is able to bear many strains, and even excesses,

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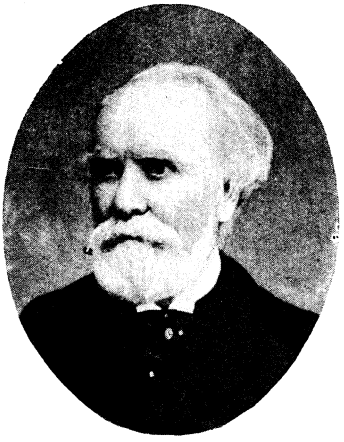
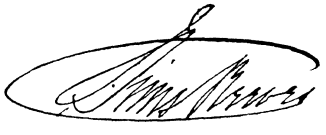
that would quickly kill another. If you look at the lives of old men, you will see that not all were able to live quiet, regular existences; but they could ward off possible evil effects by their own inherent strength. In the case of a singer, you are obliged to live regularly, if you are to give the world your best. The artist must often sacrifice himself and his own tastes if he wishes to keep his voice in the best condition.

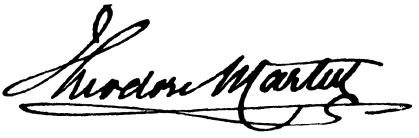


SIR THEODORE MARTIN.
Photo by Walery, Regent Street, W.

"Coming to exact rules for maintaining long life," Mr. Sims Reeves continued, "regularity and moderation are great things. I have found the greatest benefit from the daily tub, and from a thoroughly good rubbing down every day. As for hard work proving harmful, that is not the thing to hurt any man. No doubt, as old age comes on, it limits one's activities, and one finds that the tasks of young manhood are no longer to be attempted. If you do attempt them, Nature quickly gives you a reminder that you had better desist. Yet increasing years have, too, their compensations—compensations undreamt of by youth."

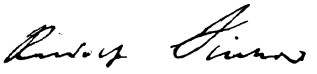


The following letter possesses a melancholy interest at present, because of the death of Lady Martin since it was written. Sir Theodore Martin, best known by his "Life of the Prince Consort," writing to me from Bryntyrilio last September, said:—"A sound constitution, not tempered by excess of any kind, activity of mind and body, and careful heed of what Nature suggests as to what should be done and what avoided, go to secure length of years. Length of years is desirable when the heart keeps its youth and the faculties are unimpaired, not otherwise. Such is my creed, and I should say Lady Martin's is very much the same."



Professor Virchow, the great physiologist and Liberal statesman of Germany, writes:—

"It would be necessary to write a book on such a theme. My 'secret' is the regular change between working and rest, not only in the alternation of the action of the different organs, but equally in the activity of different powers of the same organ."



Here for the moment we leave our famous veterans. It is not easy to draw from their varied experiences any exact rules. Their habits of life, their variety of food, were of the most diverse kinds. "What is one man's food is another man's poison." Some strongly recommend total abstinence; others are as firmly convinced of the benefit derived from very moderate use of alcohol. Some have been blessed with vigorous constitutions from the first, and have known little of physical suffering; others have had to fight against delicacy in their youth, and have proved how it can be overcome. But one and all have found that a full life, a life of great endeavour, has led to health of body and mind. Not for them has been the slothful ease, the shifting purpose, which ruins so many lives. Giving themselves and the best of their talents to their day and generation, they have proved and yet bear witness that life is worth living. Pessimism finds no encouragement from our famous living veterans.

PROFESSOR VIRCHOW.
Photo by W. & D. Downey, Ebury St., S.W.

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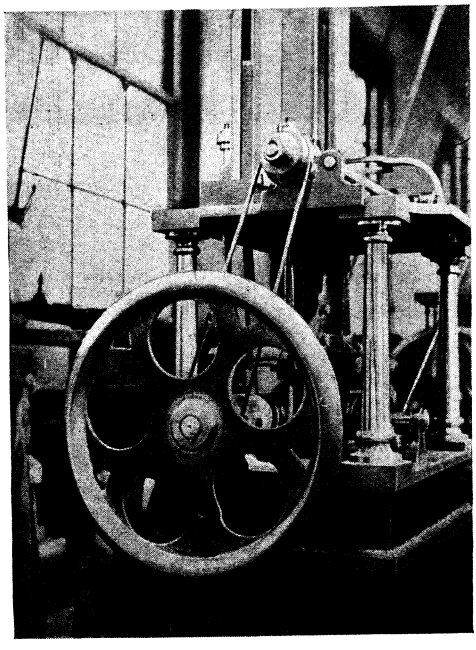
THE ROMANCE OF A RAILWAY TICKET.

By A. Wallis Myers.

Illustrated from Special Photographs by R. A. Shield.

"ALL TICKETS, PLEASE!"

ROMANCE in a railway ticket? Impossible! Could anything, you say, be more insignificant than the little piece of printed pasteboard, indited with conditions and figures which none of us can understand—and few of us observe—and to gain which we pay heavy prices and are the recipients of much abuse? But stay; has not the mere insignificance in size and weight been the cause of many travelling troubles? Temporary they may be, and soon passed from memory; yet the loss of your ticket when you have used the company's carriage for a distance of three hundred miles, and the wretched collector makes you pay over again, causes your enthusiasm for railway tickets to be anything but exhilarating. The company and all their officials are mentally, if not audibly, consigned to Jericho.



DOUBLE PRINTING MACHINE.

Consider for a minute the hundred and one little incidents—some humorous, some tragic, some pathetic—which are daily wrapped, figuratively speaking, round the little piece of pasteboard known as a railway ticket. Here is the thin man, with more audacity than money, who, alone in the carriage, quietly deposits himself under the seat when the cry goes up for "All tickets, please!" There is the fond mother who redresses the four-year-old boy in a long discarded baby's skirt and hugs him to her breast at Vauxhall, in order to escape that half fare, the reduction for children "out of arms." Surely, too, you have noticed the agility of a third class ticket-holder, who, having ridden with calm serenity in a "first," hurriedly quits his superior compartment and hastens on to join the throng of "parlyites," lest the colour of his ticket should be officially tested. Nor, perhaps, have you failed to decipher in the anxiety of a certain few fraudulently disposed people—and alas! these do exist even on modern railways—who, when the ominous cry, "All seasons ready!" is heard at the terminus, and they, perforce, being not on the company's books, must pay up and look sweet, a certain surprise that their methods of free travelling have not before been discovered. Much could be written round about the humours and the quiet frauds of railway travellers, but space

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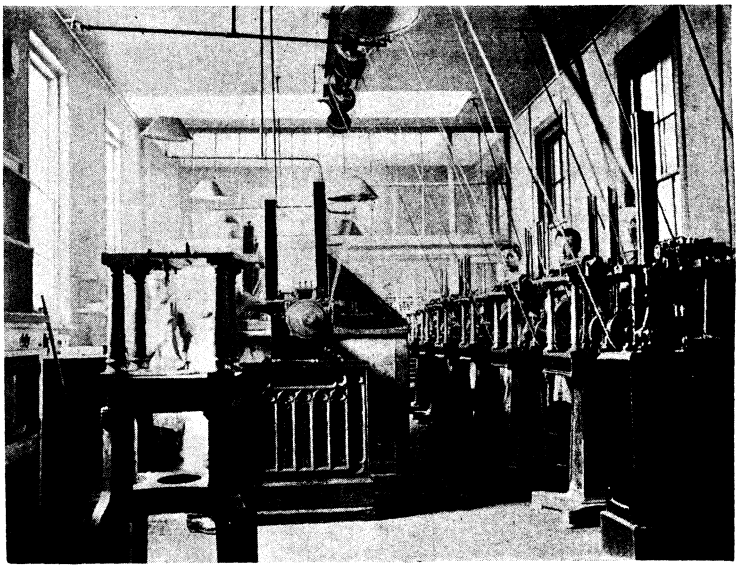
is limited and we must pass on to the actual history of the railway ticket's career.

In their infancy railways possessed a ticket system which was at once primitive and cumbersome. Each passenger was supplied with a large green paper ticket, upon which the booking-clerk had to write the date, the name of the traveller and name of the station, while at the same time he retained a counterpart of each ticket to enable him to keep a correct account of the money taken. On the Leicester and Swannington line, Mr. Arthur Montefiore tells us, metal tickets were used, on which was engraved the name of the station to which the traveller was going. When the passengers reached their destination these tickets were collected by the guard, placed in a leather pouch and taken back to Leicester to be used again. During this continual handling, as was only natural, they became severely mutilated by unscrupulous but sometimes very ingenious people, and weird and strange were the carved brass figures which now and then found themselves back at the booking-office.

We are indebted for our present system of making the tickets to a Quaker named Thomas Edmonson, who in 1840 invented a machine which, though it of course passed through various improvements and additions as time went on, remains in form and principle practically the same now as then. Mr. Edmonson was a railway clerk at an insignificant station on the Newcastle and Carlisle line. In the course of his duties he found it very irksome, not to say tedious, to have to write on every ticket he delivered, and perceived how much time might be saved by the use of some mechanical means. Walking one day in a field—so the story runs—the idea occurred to him how easily and expeditiously tickets might be printed with the name of station, the class of carriage, and consecutive numbers in one uniform arrangement. With the aid of a friendly watchmaker named Blaycock, Edmonson was enabled to construct the necessary machinery. He took out a patent, and the Manchester and Leeds Railway Company were the first to avail themselves of these brand new tickets. The same company, with an eye possibly to future contingencies, also secured the inventor at their station at Oldham Road; but so widely known and appreciated did the new invention become that Mr. Edmonson soon withdrew himself from other engagements to perfect its details and provide tickets to meet the daily growing demand. The enterprising man let out his patent at the rate of ten shillings per mile per annum. In early life he had been a bankrupt, and the first use he made of his new wealth was to pay off every shilling he ever owed. He died in June, 1852, aged 58.



THE EUSTON TICKET-PRINTING DEPARTMENT.

Edmonson having led the way, mechanical contrivances for printing, counting, stamping, and dating railway tickets soon sprang into existence in shoals. All the important railway companies instituted a special department for printing and issuing tickets, which industry employs at the present day hundreds of men. At Euston they turn out about 60,000,000 tickets a year, and as the demand practically equals the supply, the number of ticket-holders may be easily gauged. A million railway tickets weigh just a ton, so that an aggregate weight of sixty tons is distributed annually from the thousand stations and offices in the company's system to the millions of travellers on their lines.

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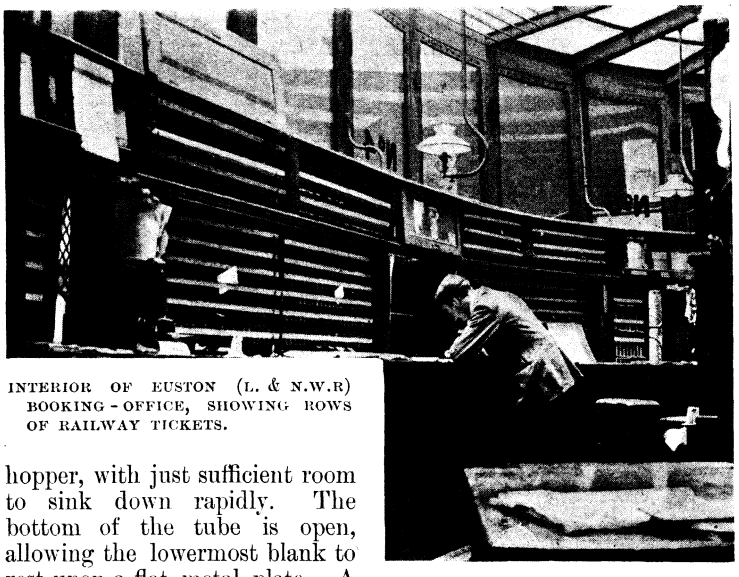
At the ticket-printing establishment of the London and North-Western Railway, at Euston, there are thirteen printing machines and five counting machines, besides numerous other instruments for cutting, smoothing, and distributing. The thin pasteboard, of which sixty tons in three colours—white, pink, and green—are sent annually from the paper mills, is cut up by machinery, at Euston, into little blank slips, then comparatively valueless. The majority of other railway companies are supplied directly with the cut-up slips. At Waterloo the cardboard is supplied in boxes of about 50,000 each, at the cost of approximately a shilling per 1,000. Five hundred of these blank tickets are placed in a kind of tube or hopper, with just sufficient room to sink down rapidly. The bottom of the tube is open, allowing the lowermost blank to rest upon a flat metal plate. A slider, with a rapid reciprocating horizontal motion, strikes the lowermost blank dexterously aside to a spot where it can be printed on the back with "regulations," etc. (Some of the companies have now discarded the back printing, placing any regulations in a legal manner on the front.) Another sharp stroke drives the blank further on, where the printing of the front is effected. When finished on both sides, it is struck on again, and comes underneath to an exit or delivery tube, up which it is driven by a series of jerks. For numbering, a peculiarly constructive wheel is adopted, which changes its particular digit every time a new blank is presented to it. A tell-tale index and a tell-tale bell, both automatically worked, give information as to the number of tickets printed. If the consecutive machinery does not go forward in perfect order, a spring is released which rings the bell, so that the attention of the attendant is arrested, and he at once proceeds to ascertain the cause of the irregularity. On this point the greatest care is exercised, as for obvious reasons on no account must any tickets with duplicate numbers be issued.

The celerity and accuracy with which these printing machines—using, by the way, 12 lbs. of ink a month—are worked may be judged by the fact that 167 tickets are completely finished in a minute, and 10,000 in an hour.

The wording on tickets—though originally a very simple and straightforward legend—has from time to time been augmented, until now practically every niche and corner is printed over. In olden days the ticket simply bore the name of the station from which it was purchased and the name of the destination to which it was issued. These lines were printed by stamping through an inked tape, a very old-fashioned method. Now that double printing is done on the same machine, every letter is indited at the same time, and we get the company's name, the regulations, the number of the ticket, class, fare, and private station number, with, of course, the two limit stations concerned, impressed upon the blank in one operation. The numbers range from 000 to 9999, in strictly consecutive order. When this first series is exhausted, the North-Western add a letter of the alphabet on the left-hand corner of the number, and thus a tremendous area of numbering is open to them. It may be asked, why take such pains to give every ticket a distinctive number? The reason, looking a little closer, soon becomes clear. The number of tickets usually allowed to a railway station is a six-months' supply. The demand for a fresh stock is sent in the first instance to the audit office. As the tickets are numbered 0 to 10,000, the booking-clerk has to account for every ticket as so much money. A general



INTERIOR OF EUSTON (L. & N.W.R) BOOKING-OFFICE, SHOWING ROWS OF RAILWAY TICKETS.

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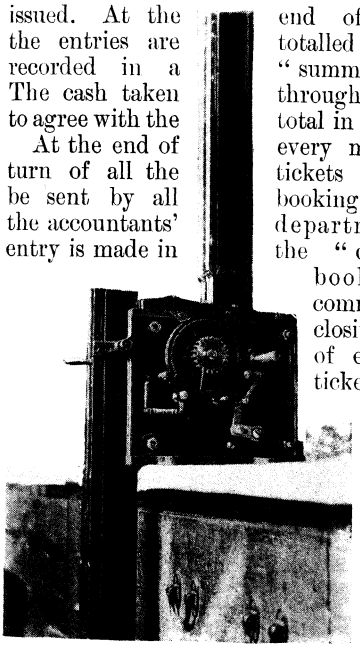
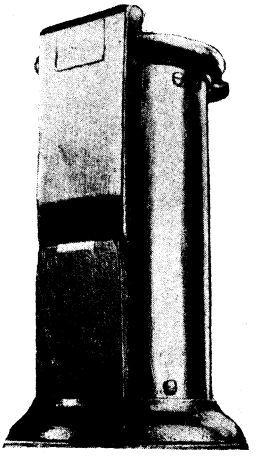
stock is placed in drawers according to their consecutive numbers, while those for immediate use are placed in cases containing a number of compartments in the order of stations and classes, the lowest number being placed at the bottom. These compartments are placed in rows or sub-divisions, and under each row a piece of slate is fixed, on which is inserted the number of the ticket next to be used. When the booking for a train has been completed, the names of the stations to which passengers have taken tickets are entered in a "train book," printed and ruled for the purpose, and the figure is arrived at by deducting the numbers on the slate from the next numbers to be issued. At the end of the day the entries are totalled up and recorded in a "summary book." The cash taken through the day has to agree with the total in this book.

At the end of every month a return of all the tickets sold has to be sent by all the booking-clerks to the accountants' department. An entry is made in the "classification book" of the commencing and closing number of each set of tickets; and the total amount of money received for ordinary tickets, season tickets, parcels and telegrams, must agree with the sum paid during the month into the bank. Everything must balance to a farthing. If the booking-clerks take bad money they lose it. Some companies, less exacting than others, hold their clerks responsible, I believe, to account for the actual amount of the fares on tickets sold, and question nothing more. Some idea of the amount of money that flows through the narrow wickets of some booking-offices may be formed from the fact that the "takings" by the seventeen booking-clerks at the Euston station, from passenger tickets alone, amount annually to upwards of three-quarters of a million sterling—and this total yearly increases.



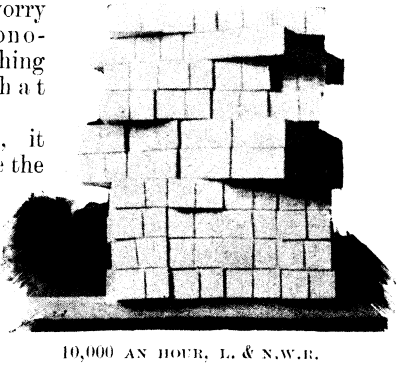
COUNTING BY MACHINERY.

It is a matter for some little conjecture why the various railway companies do not adopt the same distinctive tint for each of the three classes, instead of using separate colours for their own systems; but the chief reason is, probably, to facilitate the work of the sorters at the Railway Clearing House, of which mention will be made later, in sifting the pasteboards issued by each company and arranging them in piles peculiar to this and that line. The North-Western, for instance, adopt white, pink, and green, while the colours of the South-Western are white, blue, and red. Those of the District line are white, blue, and heliotrope, but the London, Brighton and South Coast Company uses white, red, and yellow tickets.



DATING MACHINE AT THE BOOKING-OFFICE.

So far nothing has been said about that forbearing and keen-eyed railway official, the ticket collector. Taken on the whole, he is one of the most hard-working, one of the most civil and conscientious functionaries that guard the doorway through which every traveller must pass. His hours are long, his troubles many, and the irascible and eccentric passengers who continually hamper his movements do not tend to prolong the extent of his natural life. Have you ever noticed how many comparatively young ticket collectors are the unfortunate possessors of grey hair? It is worry and monotony, nothing else, that does it.



10,000 AN HOUR, L. & N.W.R.

Ladies, it seems, are the worst offenders in ruffling the temper of the innocent and patient collector. One, for instance, couldn't find her ticket, and had only a sovereign to pay a ninepenny fare. The

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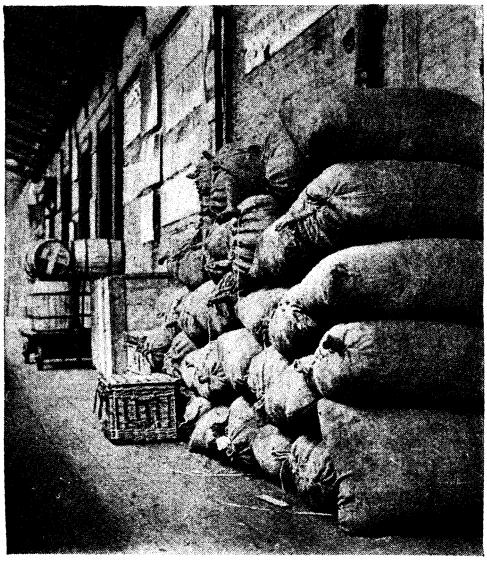
collector couldn't stop the train while he hunted for the nineteen and threepence, so perforce had to jump into the carriage and



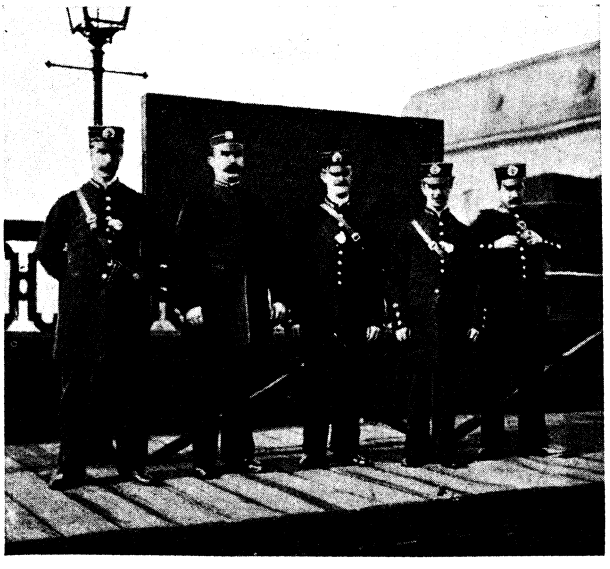
SACKS OF USED TICKETS READY FOR THE MILL TO BE RE-MADE.

to accompany the lady to the terminus, only to find to his unfathomable disgust on arrival that she had been sitting on the ticket all the time! Many are the queer places in which people will hunt to find that return half that never turns up. One collector told me that an eccentric old gentleman even went to the luggage van and overhauled all his luggage in a fruitless search.

When the tickets are collected and examined at the different points on the line, on being given up, they are far from being done with. At the close of each day the tickets collected are arranged according to their respective numbers and stations, and sent to the head-quarters of the company for examination. Here they are compared with the returns of the tickets issued, and those which have been used for two or more companies' lines have to be forwarded to the Railway Clearing House, so that the proportion of the fare due to each may be allotted. If, for instance, the booking-clerk has had occasion to cut the ticket in half for a child, he must send the unsold portion to the Clearing House in order to avoid being debited with the full value of the ticket.

The booking-clerk is not without his quaint and amusing experiences. Passengers will often ask for tickets to the station at which they are booking, or to places they are thinking of, but not going to. They will get angry and stamp their feet when the clerk gently reminds them of their mistake. Others have not sufficient money, and leave baggage as security, on which they are given a "way-bill," so much "paid on" and so much "to pay" on their baggage. This is given to the guard of the train, who hands it to the stationmaster at their destination.

I believe I am not far out of the mark when I say that no less than 360 millions of railway tickets are issued and become out of date in one year. What becomes of all these old tickets? When they have been finally checked at the offices of the company, or at those of the Clearing House in Seymour Street, N.W., they are cut by machinery into little strips of pasteboard, and these are packed into sacks and sent back to the paper mills, there to be reconverted into card-board, some of which must again figure in the booking-offices of the company as new tickets. Surely this is romantic enough; to think that we may be paying for and carrying a railway ticket which many years ago may, with a new coat, have by its paper value carried some famous personage to his destination!



A GROUP AT GROSVENOR ROAD (L. B. & S. C. RAILWAY).

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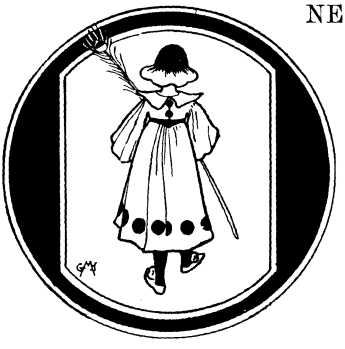
STORIES OF THE GOLD STAR LINE.

By L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace.

Illustrated by Adolf Thiede.

No. V.—THE YELLOW FLAG.



ONE hot night in September, 1896, Dr. Martin, our ship's doctor, and I were having a quiet dinner at the Caulfield Hotel in Melbourne. The *North Star* was to sail for England on the following day, and amongst other matters we were discussing the possibilities of the voyage, what passengers we might expect on board, and what adventures we were likely to have. The meal proceeded cheerily, for we were both in the best of spirits. We had nearly finished, and were having a smoke with our coffee, when I suddenly noticed that Martin was gazing intently across the room. I heard him say, half aloud—

"Well, if that is not the man himself, it is his ghost."

"What do you mean?" I cried, turning in the direction in which he was looking.

Martin bent towards me.

"Do you see that fellow sitting at the table to your right—a sunburnt chap with black hair? He is either my old friend, Dudley Wilmot, or his ghost. I have not seen Wilmot for years, and what brings him here now is more than I can imagine. When last we met he was in London, and he was as jolly a young fellow as you could find in a day's march, but as wild as a hawk. I believe he was guilty of some boyish escapade, nothing very great in itself, but sufficiently bad in the eyes of all his people to make them send him out of England. By Jove! it is himself; he has spotted us and is coming over."

As Martin spoke a tall, broad-shouldered man of about thirty got up from his seat at the table where he had been dining and came towards us with a smile on his face. He was in a tweed suit, and in defiance of appearances was smoking a short black pipe. His deeply tanned face showed him to be no townsman.

"Hullo, Dudley! Where in the world did you spring from?" said Martin, rising and shaking hands with him. "I thought it must be you; let me introduce Mr. Conway, our purser."

Wilmot bowed to me and took a seat at our table.

"I only came down last Tuesday from Queensland," he said. "I have had a pretty rough time since I met you at my old uncle's house five years ago."

"What have you been doing?"

"Wandering up and down and to and fro on the earth, as usual; but I have been buried in the bush for four years, and am about sick of it. I am going home to-morrow. By the bye, you are still doctor on the *North Star?*"

"Yes."

"That is good; I am going in her, and I am right glad to see you. I believe I am in for a bit of luck."

He spoke in an excited manner and a flush had risen to his bronzed face.

"Well, you look pretty jolly," said Martin; "what is the luck?"

"You would like to have a chat alone?" I said, rising. Wilmot jumped up also.

"Not at all," he exclaimed; "in fact, I would rather you know, Mr. Conway, than otherwise. I will tell you both if you listen."

"I shall be much interested," I answered. I sat down again.

"It is the queerest story," he began. "I have had a rough time since I came out, and have been through the mire—Jackeroo, storekeeper, horseboy, drover—the usual round; then one season I struck a piece of luck and bought a small sheep station. For a year everything went well—plenty of water and grass, and wool at a high figure. Then last year came the drought, and on the top

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of it the floods. It is always the way in this country. One is always gambling with the weather; and of course I lost. Well, last month things were so bad that I mortgaged my station up to the hilt, and the outlook got worse and worse, and I thought it was a clear case for the bankruptcy court. But last week, just a fortnight ago, the wife and I were having supper in our little house, when she started and read something aloud from a paper which had been sent up from Brisbane. I tell you it astonished us both."

As he spoke he pulled a newspaper from his pocket, and, handing it across to Martin, invited us to look at it.

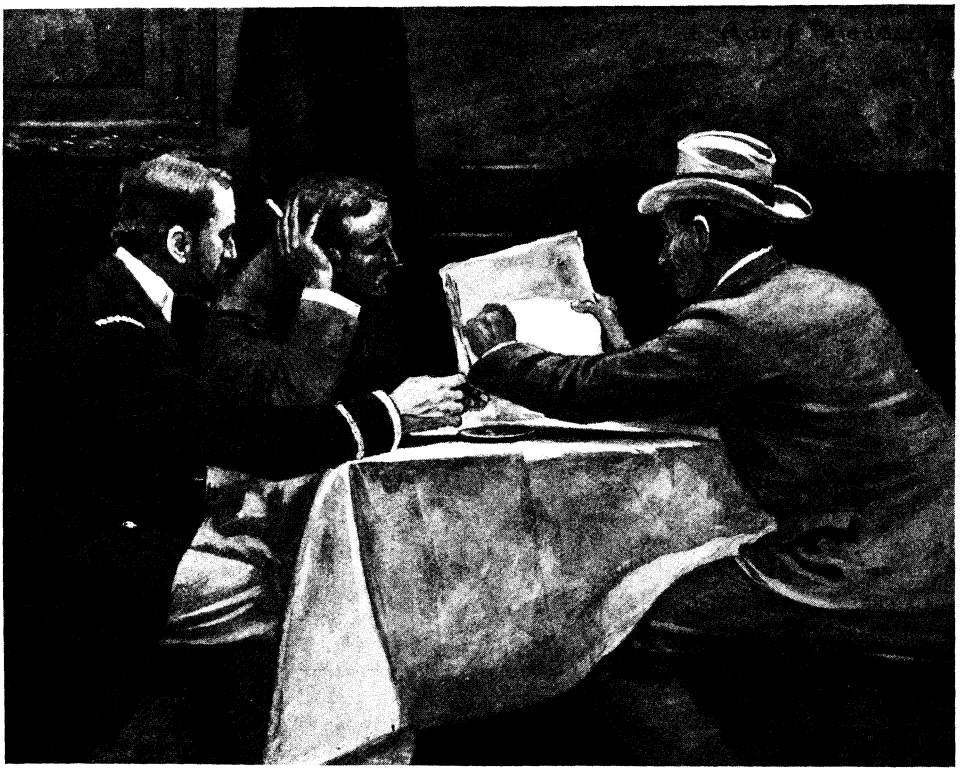
"This is the paragraph," he said.

Martin read aloud as follows:—

"If Henry Dudley Wilmot, son of David Wilmot, of Grey Towers, Winchester, England, or Dr. Albert Dollory, his cousin, both of whom left England in 1891, will communicate with Fisher, Sands & Co., solicitors, Long Street, Melbourne, they may hear of something to their advantage. Anyone giving information as to their whereabouts will be rewarded."

"And what does this all mean?" said Martin: "it sounds good."

"I will tell you," he answered. "I came straight away down, you can bet, and went at once to Fisher & Co. They showed me a letter from their firm at home, asking them to find one of us, and for this reason. You know I have been cut off from all communication with the Old Country. I got into my father's black books, and he forbade any of the old folks to have the slightest communication with me. They never wrote to me, and I never wrote to them. My father, it seems, died last year, and, as I expected, he cut me off without even the proverbial shilling. But my old uncle, my mother's brother, William Seaforth, who was as mad as a hatter, but a right good sort at heart, died three months ago and left a will leaving his pile to either myself or his other nephew, Dr. Albert Dollory, provided that one of us came to claim it before the 4th of November this year. If neither of us turned up at the office in Lincoln's Inn by that date, the money was to go to St. Thomas's Hospital. You see, no one knew whether either of us



"'This is the paragraph,' he said."

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was alive, because Dollory left home about the same time as myself. Now the will goes on to say that whichever of us two gets home first and satisfies the lawyers as to his claim, he is to have the money—a biggish sum, something like seventy thousand pounds, they say."

"By Jove! it is a big thing," I said. "How about the other man?"

"Dollory turned up yesterday," said Wilmot, shrugging his shoulders. "Just my luck! I saw Fisher this morning, and he told me that Dollory had seen the advertisement and had come to know all about it."

"Have you seen him yet, yourself?" asked Martin.

"No, but he is in town somewhere, and I suppose will come home by the *North Star*, too."

"Then it is to be a race?" I said.

"I hope not. I think we shall have to come to some terms and divide the spoil. I have wired to the wife to say I am going home, and to keep up her heart till I return; but, by Jove! if Dollory won't come to terms it will be a queer sort of business, eh?"

"It will, indeed," I said.

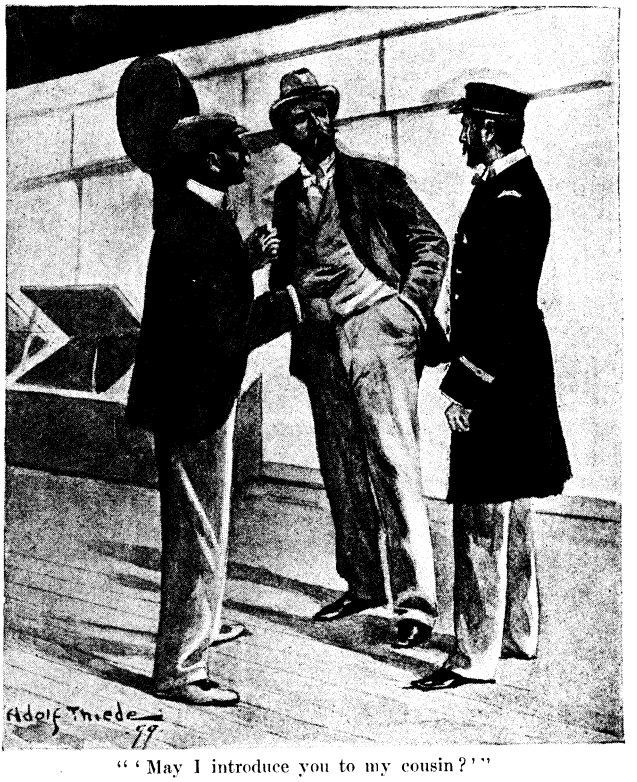
"If I fail, I am absolutely ruined," he went on. "I have drawn my last cheque and have borrowed money to get my passage home—first class, too, for I thought I was certain to get the fortune, and felt sure I should have the start of Dollory, until Fisher's news this morning. Now the aspect of affairs is altogether changed, and my last chance is the hope that he will not come home by the *North Star*. If he does not he must be out of it, as the next boat home, the *Tunis*, an Orient liner, does not leave Melbourne for five days; thus I shall have five clear days' start of him. But he is certain to go by the *North Star*. I wish my uncle had had the sense to make a decent will, but he always was a crank."

As Wilmot spoke he knocked the ashes out of his pipe savagely and began cutting black Nail Rod for a refill. Martin and I glanced at each other, and for a moment we did not speak; then Martin, who was chewing the end of his cigar nonchalantly, bent across and said—

"Look here, Hal, you had better come on board to-night, and we will have a look at the passenger list and see if Dollory's name is in it. Do you happen to know anything about him? have you ever seen him?"

"I have never seen him, but I have heard of him. I heard something two years ago quite sufficient to make me think that he would not show his face in Australia again. They hang murderers in the Colonies, as well as at home, you know."

Martin whistled and looked hard at Wilmot.



"'May I introduce you to my cousin?'"

"What do you mean, Hal?" he said.

"It is an ugly business. Even a black fellow is a human being. They say he flogged one of his blacks to death, and the poor fellow's wife, who was looking on, went mad and died. She was just about to have her first baby, and the baby died, too. Wholesale murder, I call it."

I could not help shuddering.

"Such a fellow belongs to the scum of the earth," continued Wilmot; "and I say, frankly, the more I think of his running a race with me for this property the less I like it."

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"He will do you if he can," I could not help saying.

"Aye, that's just it; he will if he can. I must be even with him, and armed at every point."

"What is his business?" said Martin suddenly.

"Well, you see, he studied for the medical, and considers himself qualified, but I do not think he does much in that way. He has been about everywhere, travelling around the East. He was in the bush for a time, but

"A bright-eyed woman was seen approaching."

after the affair of the black fellow he had to hook it. I am told that he has lately been at Singapore, Hong Kong, Colombo, Port Said, always moving about. Last year I heard that he was in Port Said, and had some medical appointment at the hospital there; but I think they found out what sort of man he was, and then I believe he took to dealing in precious stones. Anyway, he is not the kind who is likely to make a concession easy or to accept any terms."

Martin rose.

"Bring your luggage and come straight on board now," he said.

"Yes, you had better do that," I added; "I shall be as anxious as you to see if Dollory's name is on the passenger list."

Wilmot went to his room, and Martin and I waited in the hall for him. In a few moments we all started for the quay and went on board. I rang the bell for the chief steward and told him to bring me the passenger list. We glanced anxiously down it. Yes, there was the name, almost last on the list, and out of alphabetical order, showing that the man had only just booked his passage. There was the name—Dr. Albert Dollory, and underneath it Mrs. Dollory.

"Married!" cried Wilmot, with a start. "I never knew it. I am sorry for the wife."

"Perhaps it will be all the better for you," was my answer.

He turned away, looking sadly crest-fallen, and I went off to attend to other duties. I was too busy for the next twenty-four hours to give any thought to Wilmot and his affairs, and it was not until the next evening that I first saw Dr. Albert Dollory. He and Wilmot were standing together, smoking and talking earnestly. When the latter saw me he called out—

"Hullo, is that you, Conway? May I introduce you to my cousin, Dr. Albert Dollory?"

Dollory immediately shook hands, favouring me with a very sharp glance as he did so. At a first glance I thought him a rather handsome fellow. He was of powerful build and great stature, his features were dark and his black beard abundant. But a second glance showed me a deep scar across the forehead, which not only marred his beauty, but gave him a sinister aspect. Notwithstanding this defect, however, the man had a natural grace and decorum of manner which stamped him as one of gentle birth.

"Mr. Conway knows all about our queer position, Dollory," continued Wilmot. "The ship's doctor, Martin, is an old friend of mine. I met him and Mr. Conway last night at the Caulfield Hotel and we talked the thing through."

Dollory slightly raised his brows, but made no reply. I gave him another glance.

"You will forgive my interfering in this matter," I said, "but I earnestly hope you will both arrange to divide your luck."

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"Thank you," answered Dollory, "but we have decided nothing as yet."

There was a supercilious tone in his voice, and he half turned on his heel. He evidently did resent my interference, but anxiety for Wilmot prompted me to say something more.

"As you will both arrive in England on the same day, surely that is the easiest and best solution of the difficulty, and 'half a loaf is better than no bread.'"

"I cannot agree with you," replied Dollory then. "For my part, I am quite content to abide by the terms of my uncle's will. As to you, Wilmot, you will be forced to do likewise, for I shall not consent to a division. We shall have a race home; there is nothing like a little excitement."

Half an hour afterwards Wilmot approached my side.

"I have failed to make any terms with my cousin," he said.

"Keep up your heart," I answered; "the lawyers will in all probability insist upon a division."

"Yes, if we arrive at the same time," was the reply. As he spoke he gave a harsh laugh. "Dollory said just after you left, 'There's never any knowing what accident may happen.' Then he stared me full in the face and continued, 'For my part, I think it would be very lame fun to fly a flag of truce when the chances of victory are so equal."

"I wonder what he means?" I said.

Before Wilmot could reply a little round-faced, bright-eyed woman was seen approaching. She came straight up to Wilmot.

"Do you know where my husband is?" she asked. "I want to speak to him about something of importance."

"I left Dollory on the hurricane deck," replied Wilmot. "Pray, before you go, Mrs. Dollory, let me introduce you to my friend, Mr. Conway."

Mrs. Dollory gave a quick glance into my face, as if she meant to read me through. She was a fresh-coloured, healthy-looking young woman of about two-and-thirty; her lips were firmly set, and her dark-brown eyes clear and honest in expression; but just for a moment I thought I saw a curious sort of veiled anxiety lurk in their depths. This may have been my fancy, for the queer position made me inclined to be suspicious about everything. The next moment her merry and ringing laugh dissipated my fears.

"Ah," she said, "what an adventure we are likely to have! But it is very nice to meet you, Dudley. I am, of course, deeply interested in this strange will; but rest assured of one thing—I am determined there shall be fair play."

She nodded to Wilmot in a cheery manner and went off in search of Dollory.

"How nice she is!" he said, glancing at me. "I have taken an immense fancy to her."

"I like her appearance infinitely better than that of her husband," I said. "I do not take to your cousin, Wilmot. I hope you don't think me rude for saying so?"

"Rude?" answered Wilmot. "I hate the fellow; he is a blackleg, if ever there was one! I pity that poor little woman. I wonder what induced her to marry him?"

For the next few days I did not see very much of the Dollorys; then, one afternoon, as I was talking to Wilmot, Mrs. Dollory suddenly came up and spoke to us. She said nothing in particular, and I cannot recall very much about the conversation; but when she had gone I turned and looked at Wilmot.

"What a change!" I said. "I should scarcely know her face."

In truth it was considerably altered; the round cheeks seemed to have fallen in, and most of the bright, healthy colour had vanished. The dark eyes seemed to have sunk into the head, and now the veiled anxiety could be no longer hidden; it had given place to a look almost of terror.

"What has come to the woman?" said Wilmot.

"She is completely altered," I said; "but it may be owing to sea-sickness; most of the passengers are bad for a day or two after we first sail."

"No, it is not that," said Wilmot—"I mean, it is more. There is something queer about her. She was happy enough when we came on board, and now she looks truly wretched. I wish to goodness I was safe in England. The more I see of Dollory the more I dislike him. To be his wife must be no joke; I can scarcely wonder that the poor little thing looks bad."

"Have you come to any sort of terms?" I asked.

"About the money? No; he is as obstinate as a mule. I am no coward, Conway, but frankly I don't believe he would be above playing me a nasty trick if he could."

"Too risky," I said, "seeing that Martin and I know your position. If anything happened to you, there would be too much motive to make things go easy for him."

"Well, at least, one thing is certain—he

would stick at nothing, and I shall watch him closely. If we both get safe to London at the same time, there is no doubt, I suppose, that the lawyers will insist on a division of the property."

"I should say none whatever," was my reply.

"That is some sort of comfort." Wilmot sighed as he spoke; then he added, "I wish I could get that poor little woman's face out of my head; I cannot bear to meet that queer expression in her eyes."

"She is afraid about something," I replied; "and doubtless Dollory has terrified her."

"By a scheme for my undoing," said Wilmot.

"We must hope for the best, Wilmot, and both watch Dollory as closely as possible."

The voyage flew by. We had a pleasant set of passengers on the whole, and many amusements were organised.

After the first day or two, during which her cheerful presence had been much appreciated by the other ladies, Mrs. Dollory kept very much to herself. She spoke little to anyone except her husband, and was evidently uneasy in the presence of Wilmot, Martin, and myself.

Just about this time I began to notice that Dollory became great friends with a young sailor on board, one of the white crew. He was a nice, easy-going, happy-go-lucky sort of a lad of the name of Philbeach. Dollory was often seen talking to him, and once as the young quartermaster turned away I distinctly saw Dollory put his hand into his pocket and thrust something into the young fellow's palm. The lad grasped it, flushed up brightly, and a moment afterwards turned aside. I went up to Dollory.

"I saw you giving a tip to Philbeach just now," I said; "perhaps you are not aware that it is against the rules to tip the sailors—at any rate, until the voyage is over."

He stared at me and drew himself up.

"On my part, I was unaware," he said, "that I was answerable to you for my conduct, Mr. Conway. If I choose to be generous, it is, I presume, my own business." He paused for a moment, then he continued in a gentler tone, "I am interested in Philbeach. He has a sick mother and a couple of sisters. I have started a collection on the quiet for his benefit, and was just giving him a sovereign to add to the fund. But there," he continued, the purple flush rising again to his swarthy face, "I refuse to discuss this matter any further."

He walked away in the direction of the companion, where he called down to his wife—

"Alice, I want you. Why don't you come on deck?"

"Coming, Albert," was her quick reply. She came racing up the companion and joined him. He laid his hand heavily on her shoulder and they walked away by themselves in the direction of the engine-house.

Meanwhile Martin and I kept a sharp look-out. I had now not the slightest doubt that the man meant mischief, but I did not think that, with all his cleverness, he would find it possible to carry any sinister design into effect. He was very careful, too, and was on the whole rather a favourite with the rest of the passengers. He was a good *raconteur*, and had a fund of excellent stories to tell, which kept the smoking-room in roars of laughter. He was also particularly attentive to the ladies on board.

Day by day, however, the change for the worse in his wife became more apparent; she was getting thinner and thinner. I noticed that she scarcely touched her meals, that she avoided meeting other people's eyes, and whenever her husband spoke to her she started and trembled. There was not the slightest doubt that a terrible fear was weighing on her spirits. What could it be? Were we really on the eve of a tragedy? I hoped not, but it behoved those of us who were in the secret to guard Wilmot with all the skill at our command.

It was, I remember, one night in the Red Sea, and we were all somewhat run down by the extreme heat, when I noticed Wilmot and Mrs. Dollory standing alone by the wheel. They were talking earnestly together. In a few moments Mrs. Dollory went down the companion, but Wilmot remained where he was, leaning over the taffrail and looking out at our long white wake. He was evidently in deep thought, for he did not turn round at my approaching footsteps, and I had to touch him more than once on the shoulder before he looked up.

"You seem quite bowed down about something, my dear fellow," I said. "Any news? Any fresh developments?"

The puzzled and worn expression of his face did not vanish at my words. He was silent for a moment, then he said in a low voice—

"Aye, and queer ones, too. There is some deep game going on; I want your advice very badly."

"What has Mrs. Dollory been saying to you?" I asked.

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"I have not the slightest idea what she means, but she came to me just now; there were tears in her eyes; she implored me most passionately to leave the ship at Port Said."

"To leave the ship at Port Said?" I answered. "Why, my dear Wilmot, this looks as if she were in league with her husband."

"You would think so at the first glance, but I don't believe so for a moment. That little woman is true, or there is no truth on earth. She is desperately unhappy and said that she was risking a great deal in speaking to me at all, but she felt she must. You may be sure I stared at her in amazement and asked her to explain herself. She did not answer directly, but then she said that if I did not take her advice I should lose the legacy. She also implored me in pity to her to say nothing of this to her husband. 'I risk much,' she said, 'much more than you imagine, in trying to save you, but I cannot see all your hopes dashed to the ground. You are a good man and he——' She did not add any more, but the look on her face was enough. We heard you approaching and she went away. It looks pretty black, don't you think?"

"Put his hand into his pocket and thrust something into the young fellow's palm."

"I hardly know what to think," I replied; "but as to taking her advice, that is out of the question. Your leaving the vessel at Port Said would be sheer madness. Beyond doubt, Dollory wants you to do so in order to get to England first himself, and has probably, although you do not agree with me, made use of his wife as a cat's-paw. Just be watchful and careful, Wilmot, and stick to your post. I shall keep my eyes open, too; but as to the Port Said idea, put it out of your head once for all. It is a vile place, and full of scoundrels. You are perfectly safe on board the *North Star*, whatever villainy Dollory may be up to."

"All right: I am glad I have spoken to you, and I quite agree with you," he answered. "I'll do what you wish, but I long for the whole thing to be over, one way or another. I am getting sick of all this mystery and worry. By the way, have you noticed how thick Dollory is with that young sailor Philbeach? What do you make of that?"

"Nothing. My dear fellow, you are over-suspicious. Go and turn in and sleep if you can. It is more than I shall do to-night. They tell me the thermometer is 120° in the stoke-hole."

We arrived at Port Said on the 7th of October, and, according to my usual habit in connection with this port, I stayed on board. Dollory, however, and several other members of the party went ashore, but Wilmot, taking my advice, did not leave the ship. We were due to leave again at midday, and as the hour approached all the passengers came flocking back. Wilmot and I were on deck, and watched them streaming up the gangway laden with their different purchases. We

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were just about to start—in fact, the gangway was already up—when Mrs. Dollory came hurrying towards us. She had not landed at Port Said, and looked now full of intense excitement. Her face was ashy white, and there was a wild, startled look in her eyes; her breath was coming quickly in uncontrollable agitation.

"My husband!" she cried. "Oh, Mr. Conway, have you seen him? Has he come on board? I cannot find him anywhere. Surely he cannot be left behind. Oh, why are we starting without him? what shall I do if he is left behind?" An agonised look crossed her face.

"I really don't know anything about your husband, Mrs. Dollory," I replied. "I certainly did not see him come on board with the others, but I will make inquiries at once."

We were already rapidly leaving the shore. Wilmot and I hurried down the companion to the saloon. There I saw the chief steward.

"Do you happen to know if Dr. Dollory has come on board?" I said.

"I cannot tell you, sir," was his reply, "but I will make inquiries at once, and let you know." He left us and gave his orders to another steward to search the place. Just at that moment I happened to glance into Wilmot's face. I saw there a curious expression of surprise and ill-concealed delight. He would not meet my eyes, and turned away to hide his emotion. I laid my hand on his arm.

"What is up?" I said.

"By Jove!" he cried, "if Dollory has missed the boat he is done for—I am bound to be home first." His lips trembled and he dashed his hand across his forehead, for in his intense excitement the drops of perspiration stood out on it like beads.

"Yes, I am bound to be home first," he repeated.

"You certainly are," I answered; "but come to my cabin—I do not understand this business."

I took him away with me, being anxious to avoid meeting Mrs. Dollory just then. The moment we entered he sank down on my bunk, then started up as if unable to contain himself.

"You can never guess what it means," he said, "the intense relief from the most overpowering anxiety and fear. If Dollory has missed the boat I am a made man."

"I would not buoy myself up with too much hope," I answered, "your cousin is the last man on earth to do an idiotic thing of that kind; but we will be sure one way or the other when the steward brings the report."

In about half an hour Mallinson, the steward, entered the cabin.

"Dr. Dollory is not on board, sir," he said; "the whole ship has been searched. He must have been left behind at Port Said. He was on shore there, it is certain, for Philbeach, one of the quartermasters, was with him and had a drink with him."

"I must go and tell Mrs. Dollory at once," I said. I left my cabin without glancing at Wilmot and met the doctor's wife coming down the companion. She was evidently looking for me.

"Yes, Mr. Conway, I have heard," she said; "my husband is not on board. Things are as I feared; but do not question me, I won't be questioned." She spoke in a broken voice, her head slightly bowed. Before I could answer her she had passed me on her way to her cabin. In some surprise, and with a vague feeling of unaccountable alarm, I went in search of Philbeach. He was busy attending to some of his duties and looked up when I approached.

"How is it, Philbeach," I said, "that Dr. Dollory has not returned to the ship?"

"I don't know, sir," was his reply. "He gave me a drink on shore, and said he would be back in good time."

"Are you hiding anything?" I said sternly. "Is anything the matter?"

Philbeach drew himself up and looked me full in the face.

"Certainly there is nothing the matter, sir," was his reply. "The doctor is a good friend to me. He takes an interest in my home affairs; he is one of the best men I ever met."

"Aye, so you think," was my innermost thought. I went back to my own cabin, where I was joined by Wilmot and Martin. I told Martin the state of affairs.

"Well, this is about the queerest thing I ever heard in my life," was his response.

"I can make nothing of it," I said.

Wilmot now interrupted us with a harsh, excited, jubilant laugh.

"I don't see anything so marvellous in it, after all," he said. "The very cleverest man may sometimes make a slip. Dollory miscalculated the time, or, perhaps—who can tell?—he got into some den of thieves in that horrid place. Anyhow, one thing is plain, he has lost and I have won."

"Time will prove," I answered.

"But it is all as clear as daylight," he continued, speaking impulsively. "I cannot

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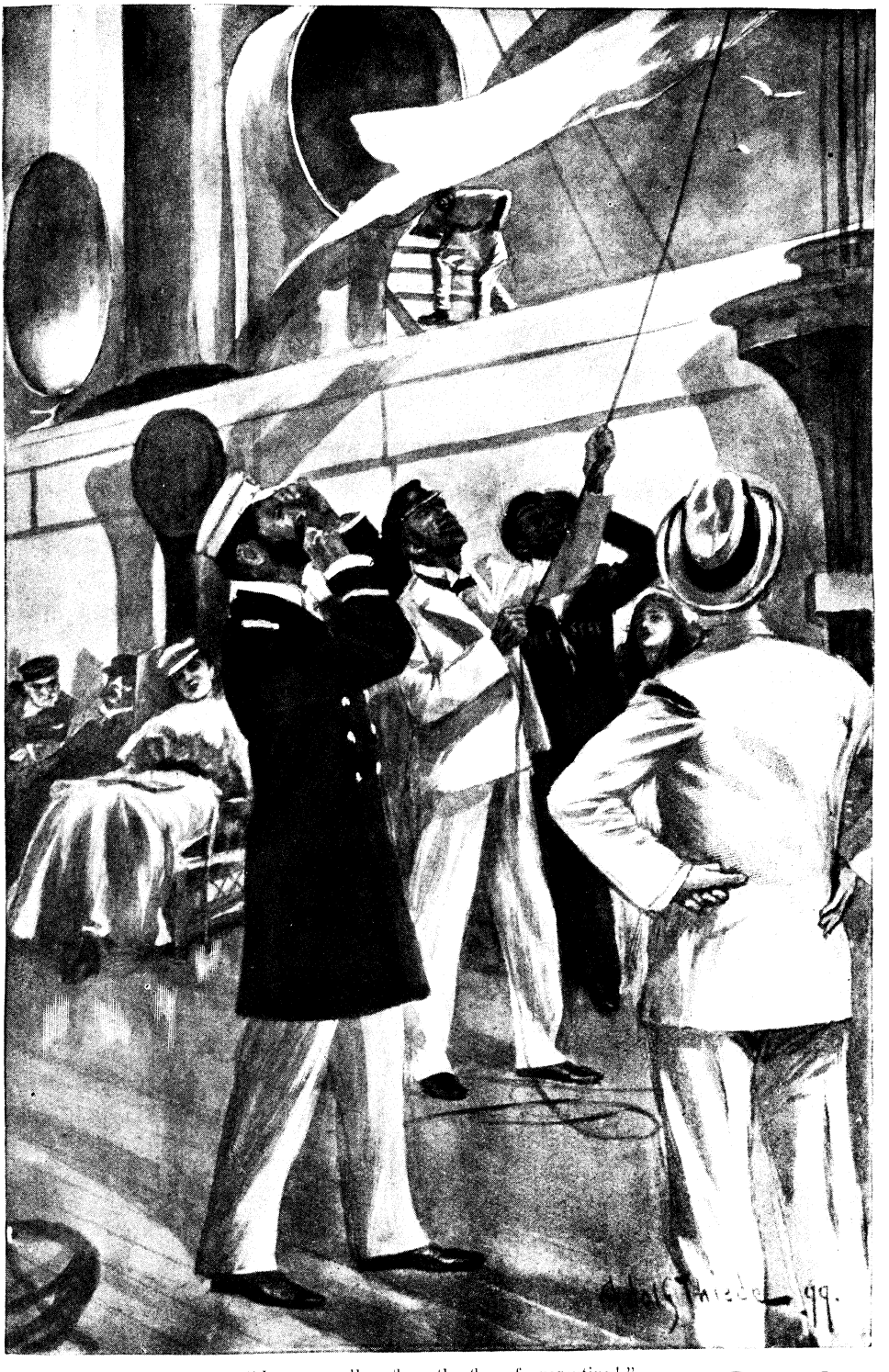

"I saw a yellow flag—the flag of quarantine!"

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make out why you and Martin look so sober. By no possibility can the man be home in time."

"I don't like Mrs. Dollory's face," was my reply. "I never saw any woman look more scared."

"Aye," responded the doctor; "but perhaps she, too, was playing a part. You said she tried to persuade you to go ashore at Port Said, Wilmot?"

"She certainly did," he answered; "but there, whatever she said to me, I trust that woman."

"You can never trust appearances in a case of this sort," said the doctor. "She is, in all probability, her husband's tool, and, whether she likes it or not, was urged to make a victim of you. Had you taken her advice you would now have been a lost man, and she is doubtless in her present distress because she sees that her husband's game is up."

Wilmot rubbed his hands joyfully.

"I wish I could communicate this good news to my own little wife," he said. "Yes, I am made, and just when I almost feared that all was lost. I feel as lighthearted as a sandboy; a load has been lifted from my mind."

Wilmot presently left us and the doctor and I found ourselves alone. We looked one at the other.

"It seems incredible that Dollory should have missed the boat," I repeated. "What can possibly have detained him at Port Said, when such important issues are at stake?"

"That is more than I can tell," was Martin's reply. "The whole thing is a puzzle; but I own I am right glad. Of course, Dollory has outwitted himself in some manner unknown to us, and my friend Wilmot is safe to win."

We talked a little further over the matter and then we turned to our respective duties.

The days flew by without incident, but one circumstance was remarked on by several of the passengers. Mrs. Dollory refused to leave her cabin or to see anyone. Her meals were brought to her there, and no information whatever could be gained about her. Martin inquired once or twice if she were ill, but the stewardess invariably replied in the negative. It was quite useless, therefore, to expect any explanation from her. There was nothing whatever to be done but to give up for the present further speculation on this queer matter. Wilmot told me that he intended to disembark at Brindisi, which place we should reach in two days, and then go straight overland to London.

"I feel as right as nails," he said. "I shall get the money and post back to join the wife by the earliest boat I can get."

He looked so radiant that the old proverb about the cup and the lip returned to my mind. A queer depression was over me which I could not account for, but I forbore to say anything to damp Wilmot's spirits.

At last the day dawned when we entered the harbour at Brindisi. Wilmot was early on deck; his face was lit up with a smile.

"I have just finished packing and everything is ready," he said. "How glad I shall be to be off! This suspense is almost past bearing."

The words had scarcely passed his lips before, to my amazement, I saw the chief officer tearing up the companion stairs, followed immediately by Dr. Martin. Martin was in such a frantic hurry that he cannoned against me and then flew past us both without speaking.

"Hullo! What's up, Martin?" I cried. But the men had disappeared into the captain's cabin in a flash.

The next moment the engine-bells rang and the throb of the screw ceased. We were still a good two miles from the shore. To stop abruptly like this was certainly most unusual.

"What can it mean?" said Wilmot.

"We will go forward and find out," was my answer.

We sauntered across the deck. The next instant I saw something that sent a sudden thrill of fear through me. At the mainmast, hauling a line, hand over hand, was the quartermaster, and above us, fluttering up higher and higher, I saw a yellow flag—*the flag of quarantine!* I gazed at it without speaking till it reached the top of the mast. Wilmot looked at it, too; then he said—

"What does it mean, Conway? What are they hoisting a yellow flag for?"

"It means that we are quarantined," I replied, and I ran to the captain's cabin. The chief officer and Dr. Martin were there.

"Come in, Conway," cried the skipper the moment he saw me. "I have just sent for you. Here's a pretty mess! There is a case of bubonic plague on board; no passengers can land here."

"Is it one of the passengers?" I asked.

"No; one of the men," said Martin—"young Philbeach. I cannot make it out at all, unless he got it at Aden; but if he had, he would have shown symptoms before now."

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My heart sank at his words, and the outline of a consummately planned plot began to take shape. Dollory had been curiously friendly with Philbeach; they had been together at Port Said.

"If he contracted it at Port Said—— ?" I queried.

"Ah!" replied Martin. "In that case he would be ill about now."

Without uttering another word I hurried back to Wilmot, who had remained where I had left him. I don't think he had yet taken in the situation, but the news had spread like wildfire through the ship, and there was something very like a panic beginning already among the passengers.

"There is a case of plague on board," I said to him. "I am sorry to tell you you cannot go ashore here; you will have to come round to Plymouth with us."

He started back.

"Plague?" he echoed. "What an awful thing! But why may I not land? Surely the sooner I get away the better?"

"It is against the laws of quarantine," I answered. "You must stay where you are. I am very sorry, Wilmot, but there is no possible help for it."

I saw that he was trying to keep up his courage, and that even yet the worst had not dawned upon him.

"We are due at Plymouth on the 28th," he said, looking full at me with starting eyes. "I shall still be in time."

"The law is that we must be five days in quarantine," I replied.

He remained silent for a moment.

"Even so," he said then. "That will bring us to the second of November—a narrow shave. But even then I shall not be too late, unless, indeed, Dollory comes on and gets home first. Could he do that by coming on in another boat, I wonder? This is most infernal luck!"

I did not dare to communicate my suspicions to him yet, and went quickly back to the captain.

"Do you know, sir," I said, "if any boat left Port Said soon after us?"

"Yes," he replied—"the *Evening Star*, one of our boats on the Indian Line; she is just behind us." He shaded his eyes and looked out to sea. "That is she coming up now," he continued. "But why do you ask?"

"I will tell you, sir, in a moment," I answered.

I ran down the companion and went at once to Mrs. Dollory. I knocked at the door of her cabin. A voice inside called out—

"Who is there?"

"It is I—Conway," I replied. "I must speak to you at once."

"Come in," she answered; "I will see you."

I entered. Mrs. Dollory was standing in the middle of the cabin. She was staring straight at the door, and her eyes had a glassy appearance. Her face was so ashy white that it almost resembled that of a dead woman—the most horrible fear had spread over each feature.

"What is the matter?" I could not help exclaiming. "You look most fearfully ill. What is wrong, Mrs. Dollory? For Heaven's sake unburden yourself!"

The expression on the poor woman's face had made me for the moment almost forget the yellow flag and the downfall of all Wilmot's hopes.

"What is the matter?" I said again.

She shook her head, and her lips formed a voiceless word which I could not catch.

"Have you heard the bad news?" I said then.

She gave a violent start, clenched her hands, and at last found words.

"News?" she cried with a stifled scream; "this is no news to me. Yes, Mr. Conway, I will speak. I have borne much from my husband, but this is beyond endurance. Will that poor fellow die? Does Mr. Martin think he will die?"

"I do not know; I have not asked him," I replied. "I am thinking of Wilmot. This quarantine business will make him late; he will lose the property. What does it all mean?"

"It was planned," she replied; "the quarantine was planned in order to detain him."

"What do you mean?" I said. My heart gave a sudden clutch at the thought of the villainy which was about to be exposed.

She clasped her hands excitedly together.

"Oh, if only Mr. Wilmot had taken my advice, and gone ashore at Port Said, all would have been well," she continued; "and I risked so much to tell him. He did not believe me, and he would not go, and I could not explain matters. Oh! I am a most wretched woman!"

"Do you say this thing has been planned?" I asked.

"Deliberately, devilishly planned by my husband," was her solemn answer. "Though I am his wife, I will bear testimony against him. I have suffered and borne much, but this I cannot and will not endure."

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She shivered all over.

"Mrs. Dollory," I said, "if you are to do any good at all in this business, please understand there is not a moment to lose."

"What do you mean? Is the poor fellow really dying?"

"I know nothing about that, but I do know this—we shall be in quarantine for five days, and your husband, beyond doubt, is coming on in the *Evening Star*, which will pass us in a few moments."

She shivered again.

"He would kill me if he knew what I am going to do; but life has become intolerable. And as to money—oh! how men sin for money, and how little it is worth after all!"

"The little woman bent over him."

"Go on," I said.

She pressed both her hands to her eyes, and then continued, with less excitement in her manner—

"You know what a curious friendship sprang up between my husband and that poor young quartermaster Philbeach. I heard Dr. Dollory propose to him to come on shore at Port Said, but for what purpose I know not. I only know that he told me that if he could succeed in a certain line of action which he had marked out for himself, he would not return to the ship. I replied, when he said those extraordinary words, 'Then you will be late?'

"'No, I shall be in time,' he answered; 'I have planned it all. Wilmot is no match for me when it comes to a question of brains. I shall be home first,' and he rubbed his hands excitedly.

"'If I succeed I shall not return to the ship,' he said. 'If I do not return, you will know that my plan has been crowned with success.'

"Oh, Mr. Conway, you can little guess my anguish when he did not come back; but what has happened I cannot tell you, although I can partly guess. When a man is a medical man, and also a devil, what awful ends can he not achieve? But will you not ask the poor fellow himself? Perhaps he will tell you the truth."

"I will see him at once," I said. "If he knows that you have told us so much, he may be induced to tell the rest. Perhaps you will come, too, Mrs. Dollory?"

"I do not fear infection," she said; "all I desire and want is to have that wicked man, my husband, punished for his awful crimes."

She followed me out of her cabin. We found Martin with Captain Meadows; they both decided to come with us to visit the sick man.

I need not describe here the horrible symptoms of his disease. He was in great suffering and in mortal danger, but he was not unconscious. He looked at us all with lack-lustre eyes when we entered his cabin, but when he saw Mrs. Dollory they began to dilate with that curious expression of fear which all those who came in contact with Dollory himself seemed to acquire.

"What is wrong?" he said in a low whisper.

The little woman bent over him.

"I mean to nurse you, Philbeach, and bring you back to health," she said, "but I want you now to tell us the truth. I am Dr. Dollory's wife, and I command you in his name, if necessary, to tell the truth."

"Of course I will tell you," said the poor fellow. "I went ashore with Dr. Dollory.

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It was for a purpose. He said he was a great man at tattooing, and had discovered a new and wonderful ink. I had always wanted to have an anchor tattooed on my arm, the same as Joe the boatswain, and he offered to do it for me if I went ashore with him. We went to a little hotel and he did it in a private room. See, that is where he did it. He gave me five pounds afterwards. I don't know why, but he told me that he was about to come in for a large property, and thought it might be of use to me. See my arm, where he did it; it hurts so dreadfully. Why should it hurt like that, doctor?"

"Great God!" cried Martin, "is it here?"

"Yes, where it has swollen."

The doctor's face turned ashy white.

"Dollory gave him the plague," he whispered to me. "That very place is the pustule, the typical pustule, there can be no doubt about it."

"You are prepared to swear this, Philbeach?" I said. "Martin, for Heaven's sake take down his affidavit."

Martin did so. The captain and I hastened on deck. The *Evening Star* was now rapidly nearing us. Even at the distance which separated the two big liners I could see the figure of Albert Dollory standing alone on the deck right up in the bows; he was eagerly gazing in our direction. Just then I heard Wilmot's step behind me.

"Good God! Conway, I am done for," he said; "I am ruined, utterly ruined. Did you see Dollory on board the *Evening Star?* He will land at Brindisi and be in London in forty-eight hours."

"No, he won't; leave things to me," I answered. "I will explain later on."

The captain and I now hurried towards the gangway; the company's launch was alongside, and the agent was standing at the bottom of the steps. Captain Meadows wrote a few hasty words on a piece of paper and thrust it into the agent's hands.

"Go full steam to the *Evening Star*," he said, "and give that to Captain Baker. It is a matter of life and death. I will signal to stop her before she gets to the quay."

In an instant the launch swung off, and, getting up full steam, tore after the *Evening Star*. At our signal she suddenly stopped, and the launch went alongside.

"What did you write?" I asked of the captain.

"This," he replied. "I have asked the captain to send Dollory back here at once. He is *our* passenger and must answer this charge to *me*."

In less than a quarter of an hour the launch was back again, bringing Dr. Albert Dollory. He was in irons. From this we knew that, mad with fear and a guilty conscience, he had offered resistance on board the *Evening Star*.

I shall never to my dying day forget the scene that followed. When he discovered that his own wife had laid information against him, his rage and passion knew no bounds. Perceiving that all was up, however, he confessed what he had done, but without a spark of regret.

"Had I succeeded," he said, "I should have considered myself the luckiest dog on the wide earth; as it is——" he turned his head aside.

The rest of this story can be told very briefly. Owing to the care and watchfulness which Mrs. Dollory herself expended on him, and to Martin's unceasing ministrations, Philbeach recovered; but, as if there were indeed in this life some even-handed justice that makes the criminal fall into the pit he has dug for another, the only other person on board the *North Star* who caught the plague was Albert Dollory himself. Of course everything that could be done was tried to save him, but he died before we reached Gibraltar. I don't believe anyone on board mourned his loss.

We were quarantined at Plymouth, but Wilmot was, after all, just in time to receive his fortune. Although he denied it, I am almost certain that a share of that fortune went to Mrs. Dollory, whom her brutal husband had left penniless.

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The Midday Meal.

Photographic Study by Percy Lankester, Tunbridge Wells.

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THE FATHER OF MODERN JAPAN.

A TALK WITH THE MARQUIS ITO.

By John Foster Fraser.

IT was at a quiet little dinner party at Tokio—the ancient Yeddo—that I first met Marquis Ito, ex-Prime Minister, and creator of the new Japan. Not by any means a man of striking personality, about the average height of a Japanese, which is short, broad shouldered, and with something of a military carriage, his features sallow and drawn, his moustache and beard iron-grey and straggling, his hair thin but black, brushed tightly on the skull, which is level and broad. The forehead is scarred with two deep furrows, the nose wide-nostrilled, indicating some vigour of character, but the mouth weak, with lips slightly bulging, the eyes small, black, and curious—a quiet, commonplace, complacent business person—such was my first impression of one of the most notable of men.

Amiable, suave-mannered, acquiescent in argument, with absolutely no protruding domination of character, it is hard for you to realise when chatting with this man that you are chatting with the man who has made Japan a nation. For a moment you think of modern Japan, its constitutional sovereign, its House of Lords, its House of Commons, its magnificent navy, its army trained upon European principles, the country covered with railways, the great cities illuminated with electric light, tramcars rumbling along the main thoroughfares, stacks of telegraph and telephone wires lining the highways—everything is European, modern and go-ahead, everybody, save the poorer classes, dresses in English clothes and speaks the English language. You feel that you are not in the Japan of the books, picturesque and dainty, a realm of knick-knacks and topsy-turvydom, but in a wide-awake, material Japan where advancement and civilisation are the watchwords. And then your eyes wander to Marquis Ito, and you endeavour to realise how it is that he has within thirty years transplanted his nation from the fourteenth century to the nineteenth, induced it to throw off its old insular, self-sufficient semi-barbarism, put on the garb of civilisation, adapt itself to western ideas, and determinedly take its place among the nations of the earth. You try hard to grasp it all. You fail.

On several occasions I had long chats with the Prime Minister, as he then was, and I well remember one night in Marquis Ito's smoking-room, when Count Inouye was also present—Count Inouye, who has always been Ito's hard-hitting right hand in westernising Japan—hearing them tell how it was, when quite boys, they made up their minds Japan would have to open its doors to the ideas of the West. They are both advancing in years now—Ito is fifty-nine and Inouye sixty-three—both political veterans.

"You know," said Marquis Ito, in telling me the story, "Inouye and I have been linked together from early life. We both belonged to the Choshu clan, one of the two great clans—the other was the Satsuma—concerned in the restoration of the Mikado. We Choshu men take the credit of having the brains, while the Satsumas have the muscle. Well, our chief decided that Inouye and myself should go to England to learn navigation, so that on our return our knowledge would be useful in ousting the foreigners from Japan. We two young fellows accordingly went to Nagasaki for the purpose of getting a passage to England. The only word of English we knew was 'navigation.' We went into the office of the company, and when the man in charge asked what we wanted, all we could say was 'Navigation.' Everything seemed all right and away on board the vessel we went. But what was our surprise on finding that instead of being passengers we had been shipped as common sailors. All through the voyage we had to scrub the decks and work just the same as the others. The English sailors

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found out we had money and it was soon gambled away from us. Not all, for we kept two dollars carefully stowed away in an old stocking for emergencies. Well, at last we got to London, but nobody was there to meet us. The ship was tied up, everybody cleared off, and we were left alone. We got very hungry, but as we knew no English we didn't know what to do if we went on shore. However, hunger made us decide that one of us must go and buy something somehow, so we tossed up who it should be. The lot fell on Inouye."

"Yes," said Count Inouye; "I was never more frightened in my life than on that wet night when I set foot in London and started off with one of the dollars in my hand to buy food. I had to be very careful so as to know my way back. I found a baker's shop, so in I went and pointed to a loaf of bread. Of course I could not speak, but I held out the dollar to show my willingness to pay, and do you know, that Englishman kept the dollar and gave me no change. Anyway, I got back to Ito all right, and we ate that bread like wolves. Next day some of our friends came to look for us and away we went. We were in London about a year."

"And did you learn much navigation in that time?" I asked.

"No," said Count Inouye, "not very much; but we kept our eyes open and we came to the conclusion that it was all nonsense for Japan to keep foreigners at arm's length."

"The Shoguns were then in power in Japan," continued Marquis Ito, "and they were making treaties with foreigners. Our clan, however, was very anti-foreign, and hearing it was getting into trouble owing to this persistent attitude, we hurried back to our country. We got to Yokohama just as a naval expedition was being sent against the Choshus by England, France, the United States, and Holland. We at once asked for permission to go ahead of the expedition to the Choshus and try to induce our people to acknowledge the fault they had committed. Sir Rutherford Alcock, who was then Britain's representative in Japan, sent us in the frigate *Barrosa*. Well, we saw our chief, we did all we could to persuade him to make submission, and tried to show him how impossible it would be to avoid foreign intercourse."

"Yes," added Count Inouye, by way of parenthesis, "the most humiliating moment in my life was that day when we had to go back to the English ship with news of our failure. We had been so sure, we had been so filled up to the eyes with pro-foreign ideas, we could not believe in our own incapacity to convey our very strong impressions and opinions and convictions to the minds of other men."

Of course the Choshus were cut down. Dearly, however, as these two young fellows loved their country and their clan, they always acknowledged the superiority of the foreigner. They saw that Japan's salvation lay in the adoption of western civilisation, and for thirty years or more they have never rested in their labours.

Ito became known to the outer world in the spring of 1885. Then he was nearing the crest of his wave, a long maintained wave of power. There were complications with China about Corea, and so he went to Tientsin and made that celebrated convention which is really at the bottom of all the trouble about China. Returning to Japan, he set himself to effect one of the greatest administrative reforms. This was no other than to thoroughly reorganise the Government—to replace the old hereditary officials by men of the new school, and to make admission to office dependent upon examination and not upon nomination. Under that new system he himself became the first Prime Minister of Japan at the close of 1885. Then he went to Europe, to Berlin, and to London, to study constitutional law. Back he came to Japan and in 1891 the first Japanese Parliament was opened. From constitutional law Ito passed on to a revision of the criminal law, the civil law, and the treaties with foreign countries, the last of which will have a far-reaching effect, for Japan is placed in line with the civilised countries of the West.

One evening, when I had the opportunity of a long chat with Marquis Ito, I asked him, "Is it not possible that there will be a revulsion of feeling among the Japanese, that there will be a reaction against the wholesale adoptions of western methods and ideas, and that the people, partly by national pride, partly by a fear of Japanese individuality being swamped with outside influences, will want to throw off this new civilisation and go back to their old style of government?"

The Premier was very emphatic. "Never," he said; "it is impossible. Instead of western influence destroying Japanese character, it will help it. This new birth has brought out the latent power of the nation. We are not just imitating western methods. Western methods are merely the adoption of machinery which will develop the Japanese character more than it has ever been developed before.

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Until the present generation Japan had no idea of its capabilities and the place it should hold in the world. True, we are insular—we had no affection for the foreigners. But we were never eastern — eastern as it is understood by you people of the West, and we have never been servile."

"Then there is no possibility of an alliance between China and Japan with the object of resisting western aggressions here in the East?"

"The Chinese and the Japanese," answered the Premier, "are two distinct races. I cannot see that they have anything in common. The Chinese don't want to be abreast of the times, they don't want to be modern, they are self-sufficient, they are a standstill nation. They don't want a representative government, railways, telegraphs, and all that means progress; Japan looks to the future as a proof of hers. No, I see no prospect of any alliance between the two countries, not—and of course there must be this proviso—not until China turns her back on the old Asiatic methods and joins us on the sane path of progress and enlightenment."

THE MARQUIS ITO.
Photo by Maruki, Tokio.

"In any war out here in the East in regard to China it is more than likely Japan would be dragged into it. What Power would she ally herself with—Great Britain?"

Marquis Ito smiled. "You must not ask me a question like that," he said. "At present there is no war, we have no quarrel with any nation; it is for Japan to remain friendly with all governments. That there is to be trouble in the East before long I have no doubt, but what will be the action of Japan can only be decided by the course of events. Remember, we are not an aggressive nation; all we want is to develop our resources and to take the position we believe we are entitled to take in the councils of the nations."

"Japan," I said, "is, however, only a small country. Has she no desire to extend herself by colonisation? Has she not an eye on the Dutch possessions in the South?"

"No, no. Why should she want a country that is peacefully and well governed? I know, of course, that many Japanese advocate the extension of the Empire with colonies. However, it would be rash for me to predict. But what I do say is, that for still many years to come there is enough to do bringing ourselves up to a high level of civilisation."

"But your hand may be forced," I ventured. "Suppose in the event of a war there was a partition of China. Would Japan rest quiet, or would she want her slice?"

Again that mild smile played about the lips of the Premier. "Japan's attitude must be decided by the events of the future," was his diplomatic reply. "But I do say this, that Japan is now a very active factor in the affairs of the East. Years ago she was considered by western nations as nothing more than an artistic peep-show. The misappre-

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ciation of us is waning. We are taking our place among civilised nations. Hitherto we have been treated as an Oriental country lacking in honour, truth, and justice. A foreigner was held superior to a Japanese. But you know under the treaty revision, which will come into effect in about a year and a half, there will not be this differentiation. An Englishman or an American, if he breaks the law in Japan, will be treated exactly the same as though he broke it in France or any other civilised country. The Japanese and the foreigner will be equal in the eyes of the law."

"As to your Diet, your Parliament, it strikes Europeans," I said, "that there is much confusion among the parties. As yet you have not party government as we have it in England. Will you be having it?"

"In respect to the confusion, it could not have been otherwise. Bear in mind the sudden change there has been in this country, and that we have only had constitutional government for eight years. Politics in a transforming nation are not to be settled in a day, or even a year, or five years. Men are returned with more or less hazy ideas of what is required. Party principles have not had time to develop, and groups have naturally been formed round men rather than principles. All political parties in Japan wish to have party government. But the reason this has not come into effect is because no party in the State is prepared to take the responsibility of forming a Government. I should not object to see two great parties such as you have. Indeed, there are already two parties, although each party is itself divided into smaller parties."

"You don't believe, then, that there will ever be two parties with strong and antagonistic principles?"

"I do not. I don't think there will ever be a Conservative party in Japan. Japan is above all things Progressive; the only difference in parties will be how she is to progress."

"But in this steaming ahead may you not hit a rock? The family relations in Japan are altogether different to what they are in Europe—the position of women is different—and the family is always the most conservative and jealously guarded institution among all nations. I cannot understand a man readily adopting political changes in regard to the status of women."

"I admit readily," said the Premier, "that the whole question is full of difficulties. But changes are coming, and must come—the whole nation is set upon it. The social relations will change more quickly, perhaps, than you think. In Europe the family is based upon religious ideas. It is not so in Japan. Accordingly we are not so conservative. Women are already taking a different place to what they formerly occupied—more attention is being paid to their education. In this, as in all other things, Japan, at heart, wants to do what is right. We make mistakes, of course. But this modernising of Japan, lifting her intellectually, socially, commercially, is the one great fact—remember that—in our national character. I think we have some reason to be proud of what has been accomplished within the last thirty years. Japan in that time has advanced, compared with Europe, half a dozen centuries. And we have not stopped yet."

There was no misappreciating the radiant hopefulness with which the Prime Minister spoke. That the Japanese have "a guid conceit o' theirsel's," Marquis Ito would be the last man to deny.

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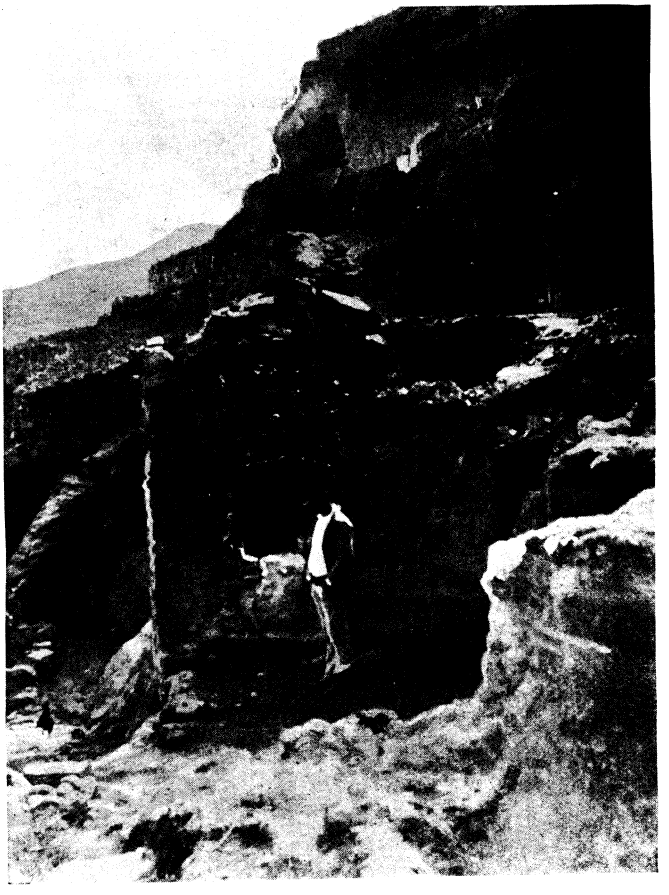
CAVE-DWELLERS IN THE CANARY ISLANDS.

By Cutcliffe Hyne.*

THERE was once a time in the world's history when the possession of a dwelling cave was a sign of wealth, refinement, and luxury; and it is conceivable that a lady who dwelt in a cave did not visit with her neighbour who had a bower in a tree-top, and would coldly cut the lower classes who resided in mere lean-tos and huts in the open. There were obvious reasons for this, easily deducible by the student of prehistoric record.

However, *tempora mutantur;* and so has the status of the cave-dweller. We others, we residents in the hut of wood or stone, of brick or stucco, have grown ourselves into a majority, and by our brute force we have changed the fashion. The cave-dweller is not merely in a minority now: we have scoffed and jeered him very nearly out of existence.



KILN OF A CAVE-DWELLING CANARY POTTER.

In Grand Canary, however, men of the past quarried out caves for habitation, and men of the present rise superior to popular prejudice, and are e'en content to live in them in this current year of grace. The original architect, that man of mighty brain who discovered that it was more comfortable to roost in a cranny of the lava cliff than to dwell exposed to all the draught and the glare of heaven, has left no name or title by which we may commend him down all the centuries of time. The vague term Guanche is all we know of his tribe. It was old when the Spaniards first invaded the Islands in 1340. It had kings, governments, a religion, and a corps of vestal virgins then; and, for all we know, these might have been ancient institutions when Herodotus named their country the Fortunate Islands some seventeen centuries earlier still.

The Canario of ancient day may have had booths and villas in the open, but at these we can only guess. It is probable, however, that his architecture drew the line at such excrescences. To say that he had a mania for caves is putting the matter mildly. He lived in a cave, he stored his grain in another cave, stabled his goats in a cave, used a cave for church, set apart another cave for the sacred college, and, finally, when he died, was

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embalmed by his friends and sewn up in goatskins, and had a cave specially delved to form his final resting-place.

Even to the amateur mind it is obvious that Grand Canary is specially adapted by structure for the easy manufacture of caves. It is for the most part made up of one huge, vast, crisp cinder, which is never disintegrated by frosts or broken by earthquake. Alternately with this it is built of a nice soft sandstone, which cuts easily when it is new, and hardens after exposure to the air. You can dash out a cave from the cinder rock with no more ornate weapon than a lump of the sandstone, and if time be no object, the sandstone cliff may be very comfortably perforated with jagged pieces of the cinder. So there are the building materials and the working tools ready to hand, and the most primitive of primitive men would want little training before he was able to handle them like an expert.

BRINGING HOME THE DOMESTIC WATER FROM THE FOUNTAINS.

It must not be supposed that all of the caves which were quarried out in those dim, forgotten ages of the past are used as places of residence to-day. The store-rooms are, as a rule, much too small; the mummy graves have the same failing, and moreover, each of these were placed in the most inaccessible spot attainable. It is very pleasant at times to be able to live in seclusion, but to have to scale a steep rock face, or to lower oneself with a rope from the crest of a precipice every time one wants to walk in and out of home, is apt to be too cumbersome for everyday enjoyment.

But, for all that, a great number of these caves have never gone out of habitation since that dim past when some forgotten savage beat them from the rock with his bare hands and a jagged stone. There are some cave dwellings in Las Palmas itself with a cobbled road in front of them, and a municipal number painted primly upon the white lintels of their doorways; and every other town and village in the Islands has its suburb of inhabited caves.

There is one village in Grand Canary—with Atalaya for a name—where the built dwelling-house is an unknown thing. There are some thousand inhabitants in the place, and they one and all live in ancestral caves. Officially, these are supposed to earn their living by the making of pots; but if their industry in begging is anything like adequately remunerated, they must make a tidy addition to this income by easier means. To be a cave-dweller in these more modern days seems to make one a natural mendicant as well, as those who know the cave folk in the gipsy quarter at Granada will very well understand.

The method of pot-making at Atalaya is primitive, like the residences. The ladies—the elderly ones for choice—do the larger part of the work. The men have to smoke their cigarettes (which, of course, takes time), but occasionally they condescend to fire the pots in a kiln, when enough are ready. The rest of the population are fully occupied in scratching themselves and begging from one another and the chance stranger.

The implements of the old lady potters are simple. The ancient Guanche who first made crocks there did not use a wheel, and neither does she. She collects the clay with

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her fingers, tempers it with her fingers, and stores it in a corner of her drawing-room. When she feels inclined to work, she dumps

PART OF THE CAVE-DWELLING POTTERS' VILLAGE OF ATALAYA.

a block of the clay on to a stone and kneads it into a shallow dish with her hands. To the edges of this she adds other sections, and so, piece by piece, builds up an almost spherical vessel which will hold a gallon, and which the housewife of Grand Canary buys to wear on her head when she is bringing home the domestic water from the fountain. So absolutely perfect are the pots that these cave-women make, that when one sees them down in the markets of Las Palmas, it is hard to believe that they have not been "thrown" on a wheel. But one may watch the whole process of the manufacture up at Atalaya, and, except that the outside surface is scraped a trifle smoother just before they are fired, the whole thing is moulded, as I say, by the hands, and the hands alone. It is very much like the mud-pie making of the days of one's youth, only the results are quaintly different.

They are not an appetising people to associate with too closely, those cave-villagers of Atalaya; for, although they have arum lilies outside their doorways, and curious old relics of Chippendale furniture inside many of their rooms, their persons are for the most part very unclean, and their manners (to the mere stranger) somewhat odious. The children flock at one's heels, keeping up a constant chorus of "Quartito, quartito, quartito!" The women beg also, and the men contribute their share

CAVE-DWELLINGS AND THEIR GRAIN FIELDS, ATALAYA.

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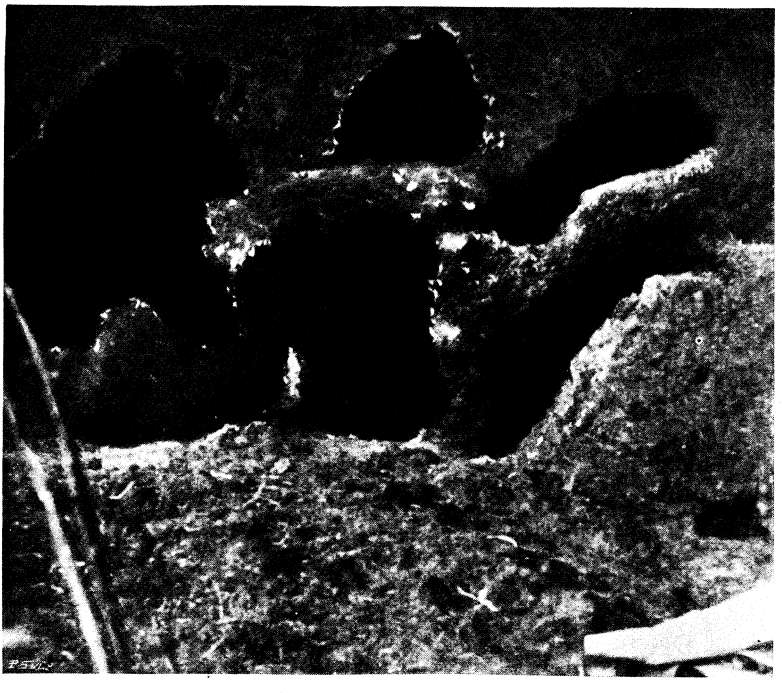
to this unfascinating industry by looking black threats if you do not give as much as they are pleased to think is due. An Englishman, of course, is fair game for spoil of this sort anywhere, and, hoping for a respite, we announced loudly that we were Americans. The war between America and Spain was then beginning to simmer into a reality, and we had been led to think that the Spanish national feeling was intensely bitter. We hoped that the beggars of Atalaya would proudly scorn American gold, or (what was more to the point) would cease to supplicate for American copper. But, bless you, they did not mind; one quartito was quite as good as another to them. America they had evidently never even so much as heard of, and the term American they took to be merely a synonym for Englishman.

Cave-dwelling may have its points, of course, but it does not seem conducive to progress. Perhaps the ancestry of the Canary cave-dweller has something to do with this. There is Guanche blood still in his veins, and he owns also as cousin the Spaniard, the Arab, the African negro, and the Portuguese trader of the West Coast, and none of these peoples are to-day in the forefront of the world's progress. A sound conservatism is a very good thing, but it can be carried too far.

CAVE-DWELLING POTTER AT ATALAYA PUTTING FINAL TOUCHES TO HER WORK.



STORAGE CAVES IN CINDER ROCK.

It seemed rather queer, somehow, that at the Metropole Hotel in Las Palmas, not six miles from this village, English men and women put on the evening clothes of civilisation when they sat down to dinner; but it says a good deal for the stubbornness with which some anachronisms will live.

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THE day was cold and the station draughty. Clarissa Fagg, a mature damsel of sixteen who prided herself upon her ability as a nursemaid, cast her eye round in search of further wrappings for the baby—already half mummified.

To say she cast her eye is unfair. Nature had already cast it for her. At any rate, she fixed it on the arch of the station roof, and at the same time laid her hand on her mistress's travelling-rug, which was lying on a trunk a little behind her on the right-hand side.

In this rug she swathed the sleeping baby, till only the expert eye of a mother could have distinguished him from a bundle of rugs.

Outside the station, two hansoms, with clattering horses and silent wheels, had just discharged their respective fares. These were strangers to one another, but each told the porter to label his luggage to C——, so it was piled on the same trolley.

The porter said there was a through coach to C——, and led the way with the luggage. For two single men there was a good amount of it—hat boxes, gun cases, golf clubs, rugs and portmanteaux, and one had his cycle.

Charlie Soper was very tall, very young, and very fair. Major Slimm was six feet two in his socks, and at least four feet round; and the two, one wheeling his machine, and the porter with the traps, made quite an imposing procession. At any rate, they impressed Clarissa Fagg, who gaped upon them with her mouth and brought up in the rear admiringly.

The porter was a man who knew his work. He found a "1st smoking" for the gentlemen, and hauled the trolley alongside, then made a show of feeling the footwarmers and went running down the platform in search of hot ones.

It was at this precise moment that an old woman, hurrying for a train, slipped and fell with her basket of oranges. The fruit rolled in all directions, and Clarissa, whose heart was in the right place, however her eye may have erred from the straight path, popped the baby on the trolley, while she helped the old lady to her feet and dived after her oranges.

So it came to pass she was out of earshot when Charlie Soper said, "Put the small things in here, porter, and be careful of the rugs," and before the last orange was back in the basket the trolley had been whisked to a distant van, and the baby had become the joint possession of Mr. Soper and Major Slimm. But the baby on the rack was not more unconscious than those two gentlemen.

As the train moved off there was a stir on the platform—a woman running—someone calling out.

Charlie looked out of window. "Someone missed the train, I fancy," he remarked.

"It's a woman," said the Major, popping his head out as Charlie's came in, "and she seems to be in hysterics."

He watched till the platform glided out of sight, then settled into his seat and retired behind a newspaper. In a few minutes the paper dropped on to his knee and the Major slept. Charlie lowered his paper when he saw the other man fairly off, and deliberately stepped into a dreamland of his own, along a path he had trodden more and more frequently of late, and where he wandered hand in hand with Nellie Seymour.

Oh! these day-dreams! Sweeter, rosier,

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more to our fancy, than those that come by night, but as fleeting, as elusive, and as vain!

As Charlie pulled at his pipe he wondered how he dared to dream that his dream might come true. He recalled the past. The never-to-be-forgotten day when he first made her acquaintance, and her father's, on that homeward voyage. The long, lazy days that followed, when they sat together, walked together, and talked—oh! talked endlessly, lightly, seriously, talked of things great, and of things small, till the night would creep on, and the stars come out, and a silence would fall between them, which to him, at any rate, was throbbing with things unutterable. But to her—ah! that was it! Who could tell of what she was thinking?

And then the nights when they danced together, or she sang! . . . . And in town, had they not met on the same sweetly familiar footing? Always such good friends—that was the worst of it—if she were not so horribly, frankly friendly! How could a man *tell*, when a girl looked at him so straight, so brightly, with such speaking eyes that said—nothing. Well, there was but one way to test her real thoughts, and that was to throw himself at her feet. He was going down now to her old country home for the first time, and let the chance but offer he would seize upon it.

He had brought for her a very precious bit of china—Nellie adored china—carefully packed in shavings in its wooden case, and rolled for greater safety in his rug. When they were alone he would give it to her, and then, if he could, if he only dare——

Charlie fell to earth with a crash as his fellow traveller awoke with a stifled snort. The Major was the first to collect his forces.

"Are we getting near C—— ?" he asked.

Charlie looked at his watch.

"Ten minutes more ought to see us in," he said.

"Do you know the country round here at all?" continued the Major, wide awake now and inclined to chat.

"Very slightly," said Charlie; "I have only passed through in going north."

"Oh," said Major Slimm, "then you will not know the whereabouts of Benton Manor. I am going——"

"Benton Manor?" interposed Charlie; "are you going there? That's rather funny, for I'm going there myself."

"Very odd," laughed Major Slimm. "Nice people, the Seymours. You know them well, I daresay?"

"Fairly well," said Charlie, and eyed his companion. Why was this fellow going to the Seymours'? Was he a rival? The yellow tiger in the lover was stirred.

"Curious how one runs against people," moralised the Major. "I met the old man last summer in the Highlands. He was staying with some friends of *my* friends. I saw a good bit of him then, and never saw him again till I ran against him in town last week. Said he had some good shooting down here, and offered me a day or two." Charlie wondered if he had met Nellie, and then wondered how to ask the question. It was very simple, but he could not say it! He framed a sentence and voiced it inwardly to see how it sounded. The longer he waited the harder it was to say.

"Have you met Miss Seymour at all?"

It came out quite suddenly before he realised he was speaking.

"Yes, several times. She was with her father. A charming girl," said the Major, and repeated reflectively, and with unction, "A very charming girl."

"He does admire her," thought Charlie. "The brute." A huge dislike of the Major filled his breast. He hated him.

"Here's our station," said the Major, pitching his cigar stump out of window, serenely unconscious that the other man wanted to kick him.

A dog-cart was waiting for the two gentlemen. The man knew Charlie and touched his hat. "There's a cart down for the luggage, sir," he said.

"If you don't mind waiting a minute," said Charlie to the Major, "I will send a telegram. I quite forgot to leave any address for my letters to be forwarded." He went to the office, but returned immediately. "Impossible to send any message," he reported. "The clerk says the instrument has been affected by a thunderstorm this morning, and there's no communication with town at present." He sprang into the dog-cart, and in another moment was bowling along the smooth white road with Major Slimm, while the porter piled the luggage on to the cart.

One! two! three! four! in went the things. A bundle of rugs, not strapped, seemed in danger of falling to pieces. The porter tucked one loose end in, then looked closer, started, and exclaimed—

"Oh, Heavens! A baby!"

"A what?" said the groom, coming round from the horse's head. The porter showed him a glimpse of yellow curls just inside one end of the bundle. The groom whistled.

"The groom whistled."

"How'd it get there?"

"It's a rum thing to find in any gent's luggage," said the porter; "but it's there right enough, just as I took it out of the carriage, and I'm not going to interfere."

"Then am I to take it up to the Manor?" asked the groom.

"Of course," said the porter; "'tain't your business to ask about it, and 'tain't mine. Whosever it is, it ain't my kid, and I ain't going to get it shoved on to me. I've six of my own." He looked round. There was no one about. "There's no one seen it but you and me. If you takes my advice you'll shut your mouth, same as me. I cleared that bundle out of the carriage along of the other things, and I'm bloomin' sorry I ever looked inside it."

"It's a rum go," said the groom, "but *I* ain't meaning to adopt of it, so we'll both keep it dark."

The porter tucked the baby up, and found it a secure position among the other luggage, and watched the cart out of sight.

And the baby still slept profoundly. Two miles of jolting up to the Manor failed to disturb it, and it was carried up with the other things into the bachelors' quarters at Benton Manor, where it lay snugly in a

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corner of Charlie Soper's room—a Human Bomb.

When Charlie came up to dress he was in high feather. Nellie had smiled upon him, had blushed when they met. He almost fancied she had returned the pressure of his hand, and her fingers had certainly come into contact with his own in the passing of a tea-cup. Moreover, she appeared indifferent to Major Slimm's very apparent admiration.

Here was food for reflection, for self-congratulation and complacency; they fed freely and waxed fat.

Charlie's surroundings ministered to his mood. The bright firelight played on the polished furniture, a couple of lamps threw a more reliable light, and in their mellow glow he preened himself before the long cheval glass.

He twisted his moustache, first up, then down, and critically noted each effect. He smoothed his glossy hair with the palm of his hand. Had he been the Major he would have used a hand-mirror at this stage, and anxiously scanned the back of his head; but Charlie's thatch was thick and crisp, and no crown as yet looked out like a rock at low water.

Mr. Soper's attention passed from his head to his necktie. He lengthened the bows fastidiously, pulled his coat, and craned to see the back effect—turned sideways to mark the beautiful line in the fall of his trouser-leg—then suddenly looked at his watch, and found he had only twenty minutes before dinner.

He made great speed with his toilet, and in fifteen minutes was going through a similar pantomime in his dress suit.

A gleam of fire in his shirt-stud carried his thoughts with lightning rapidity (*via* diamond rings) to Nellie, and the present he had brought for her. Had it travelled safely?

He looked for his rugs. This greenish bundle was not his. How came it here? He laid it on the bed side by side with his own neatly strapped roll and carelessly unwrapped it.

"Good Heavens!" he cried, "a baby!" dropping the corner of the rug and starting back.

The baby gave a little grunting sigh and opened its eyes for a brief second, while Charlie held his breath, then resumed its innocent slumber, and Charlie's heart settled down to its normal beat. He felt better able to cope with it in this condition.

"A sleeping baby is better than a roaring lion," passed through his mind. He fancied it was a Scriptural quotation.

The first shock once over, he gave way to rage. Who and what was this baby? and why was it smuggled into his room? It must be got rid of at once; but how, and where?

It seemed to have come with the luggage, but it was certainly not his, and he was not going to be made a laughing-stock, and perhaps have his chance with Nellie spoilt, through this ridiculous baby.

The only thing he could think of was to leave it secretly in the Major's room. It was, perhaps, playing rather low down, but if it was not the Major's baby, neither was it his, and so——! He grasped the child, huddled in its rugs, and tip-toed across to the Major's room opposite, hoping to find it empty.

The Major, however, had also found it necessary to linger over some finishing touches. He opened his door at that instant, and the two men met on the threshold.

Major Slimm looked inquiringly at the bundle in Charlie's arms. At this critical juncture a small white hand with five waving tentacles of fingers appeared from the wraps, and a smothered cry was heard.

"The deuce!" said the Major, starting back.

Charlie's plot was nipped in the bud. He looked piteously and appealingly at his fellow-man, who stood grinning very facetiously.

"I found it in my room," stammered Charlie at last. "It must have come with the luggage. It isn't mine, so I was coming——" He stopped for want of an excuse. He really could not say, "because I hoped it was yours."

But Major Slimm guessed it. His grin faded. He fixed Charlie with a hostile eye, and the two men regarded one another, while the tentacles waved between. Then the Major said clearly and decisively—

"That baby does not belong to me, and I won't have it planted down in my room."

To point his remark he turned, locked his door on the outside, and walked down to dinner with the key in his pocket.

Then the gong clanged and the baby whimpered simultaneously. As the gong ceased a rustle of skirts was audible in the corridor.

Charlie fled into his room. The baby was crying loudly by this time, and he shook it frantically to and fro. A wild idea of smothering it with the pillow and disposing

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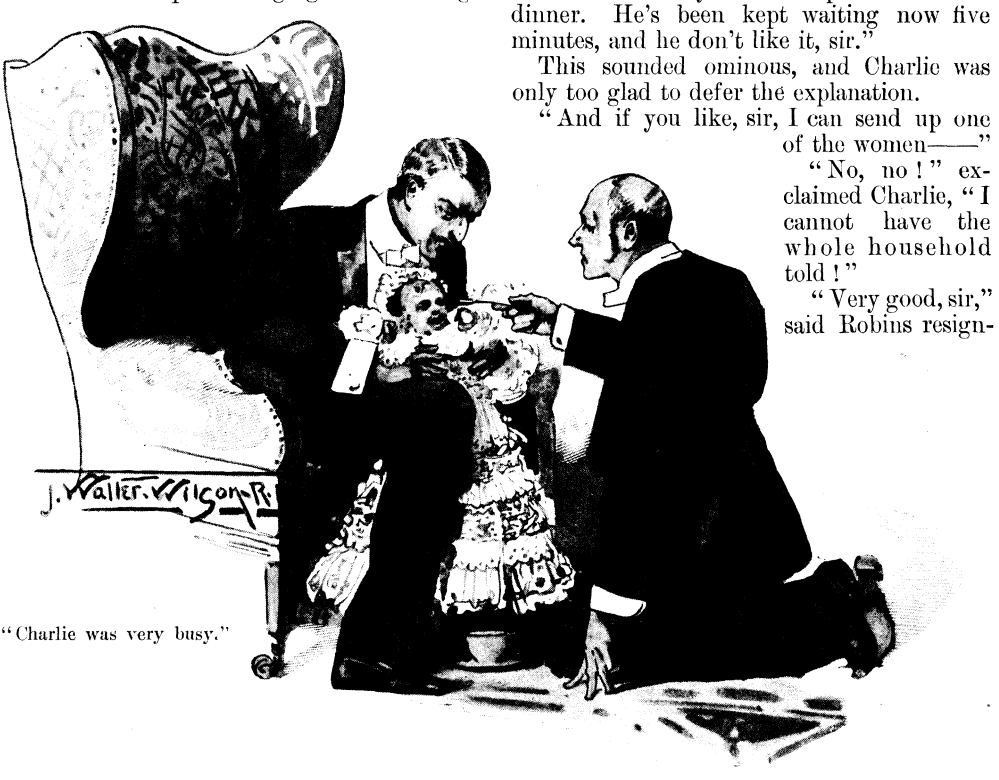
of it once for all flashed across his brain. He was in a liberal perspiration, and his collar was fast losing its pristine freshness. There came a tap at the door, and the smooth voice of Mr. Seymour's man made itself heard.

"Mr. Seymour sent me to tell you dinner is served, sir."

"Oh, *come* in, Robins!" called Charlie. It was no use hiding the baby, it could be *heard* anyway.

Robins came in with a perfectly impassive face, as though he were not at all surprised to find Mr. Soper swinging a screaming



"Charlie was very busy."

infant in his arms, with about the same action a groom employs in emptying a pail of water. As a matter of fact, he was not surprised, having previously scrutinised the scene through the crack of the door, and doubled himself up hilariously before knocking.

"For goodness sake, Robins, do take this baby," implored Charlie. "It isn't mine. I found it in my room. I don't know how it came here. It must have got mixed up with my things."

Robins preserved a discreet silence.

"Don't stand staring," went on Charlie, getting angry again, but *do* something. Invent some plan to get rid of the little brute! I can't go down to dinner and leave it howling here!"

"I think, sir," said Robins, after serious thought, "you had better explain to Mr. Seymour. It'll 'ave to come out, sir, sooner or later. There's no concealing of a baby."

Charlie groaned.

"If I might make a suggestion, sir," continued Robins, "I think you had better 'ave a toothache, or a 'eadache, sir, and ask to be excused going down. Mr. Seymour'll take more kindly to an explanation after dinner. He's been kept waiting now five minutes, and he don't like it, sir."

This sounded ominous, and Charlie was only too glad to defer the explanation.

"And if you like, sir, I can send up one of the women——"

"No, no!" exclaimed Charlie, "I cannot have the whole household told!"

"Very good, sir," said Robins resignedly, "as you please. I'll bring you up a bit of dinner myself, and I think if we could administer a cup of milk to that baby it might leave off screaming. I really think it must be 'ungry, sir."

"Robins, you're a genius!" said Charlie, and Robins departed on his errands of mercy.

Mr. Seymour was looking impatiently at the clock when Robins appeared to say that Mr. Soper had a violent toothache, and begged to be excused from dinner.

"Then we will not wait another moment," he exclaimed, rising with alacrity.

"Oh, poor Mr. Soper!" said Nellie, "how he must be suffering!"

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Major Slimm grinned sardonically and offered his arm.

"Oh, wait one minute, father," cried Nellie, "while I fetch my cocaine. I know it will cure his toothache. Robins can take it up." She ran off. At the same moment an elderly woman—the housekeeper—approached Mr. Seymour. She was stout and red and flustered in manner. "If you please, sir," said she, in a loud, frightened whisper, "there's a porter named Fagg and his daughter come up from the station, and they say we've a—a baby, sir, here as belongs to them—at least, to Mrs. Jones, the doctor's wife, and the girl's nurse there—and they lost it in London—and he says one of our gentlemen's brought it here!" All this without explanatory stops and accompanied by scared glances at the Major.

"What is this all about?" said Mr. Seymour aloud. "Do take time and explain yourself. Do I understand you to say one of my guests has appropriated an infant and brought it to my house? Preposterous! Major Slimm, do you know anything about this baby?"

"Well—er—er," stuttered the Major, pulling his moustache, "the fact is, I—er—believe Mr. Soper *has* got a—er—a young child upstairs."

"Soper!" exclaimed Mr. Seymour. "Mr. Soper!" cried his sister and a friend of Nellie's who completed the party.

"A baby upstairs!" shrieked Nellie, who had come back in time to catch something of the Major's words; "do let's go and see it." And in another moment she and her friend were careering upstairs, the aunt panting behind in the interests of propriety. Major Slimm followed more leisurely, and Mr. Seymour ordered Clarissa Fagg and her father up for purposes of identification.

Charlie was very busy. He was seated on a low chair, with the baby gripped firmly between his knees, supporting it under the arms with his hands.

Robins knelt immediately in front, and was solemnly administering milk with a teaspoon, and regularly spilling half the contents down the youngster's chin.

Both men had their mouths slightly open under the tension, and were too intent on their labours to look up till a burst of merriment from the door startled them.

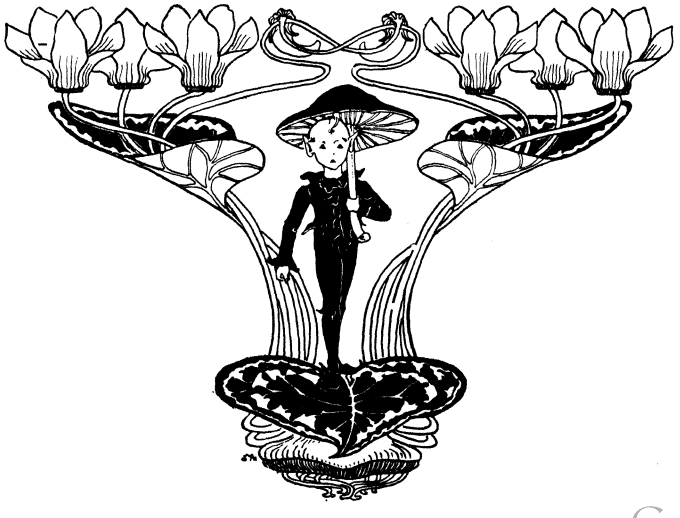
Robins dropped the spoon—full of milk—on to Charlie's knee, and Charlie only held on to the baby by a miracle.

He gave himself up as a lost man, but Clarissa Fagg bounded forward, seized the baby, kissed it nearly to suffocation, and—saved the situation.

* * * * *

That happened some time ago. Nellie Seymour is now Mrs. Charles Soper, and it is quite the usual thing for Charlie to travel with a baby, but it is no longer kept on the rack.

Neither is Charlie.



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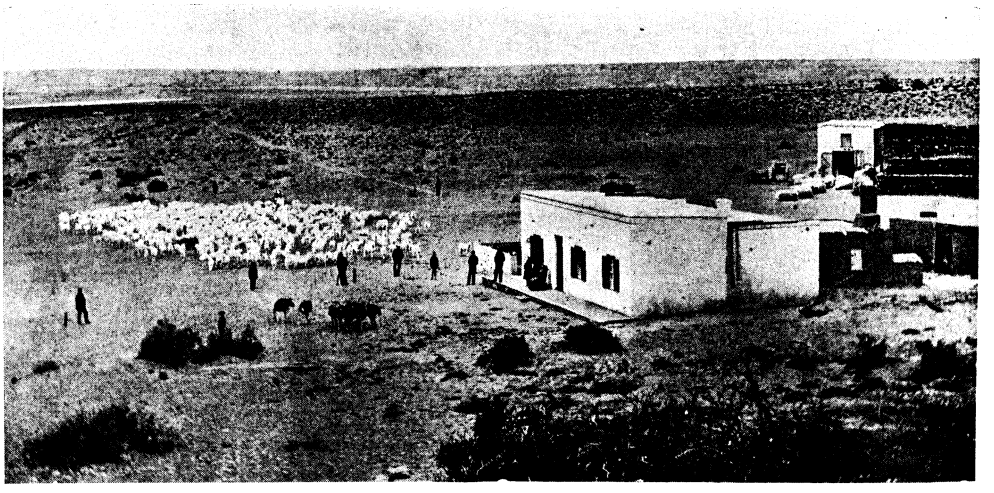

A SHEEP FARM IN THE KAROO.

THE WOOL INDUSTRY OF SOUTH AFRICA.

By James Cassidy.

Illustrated from Photographs.

To begin at the beginning, it is as well to state that the woolly sheep now found in South Africa is not an African animal at all. The native African sheep has no wool, but is clothed with hair, and hair of different colours. It is really a pretty creature when seen in a good light. It is prized on account of its tail, which is a very considerable appendage, weighing between eight and twelve pounds, although the tendency to-day is in favour of the first figure. The size and weight of the tail gave rise to the saying, a sheep of "five quarters." From the tail, when melted, is procured a substance much nicer than butter, resembling in appearance superior dripping. It is a pleasing sight to watch an old Dutch *tanta* spreading it on bread; it is, in her estimation, milk and honey and the fat of the land. The native Cape sheep is largely bred for its famous tail. There are, it is true, some who prefer the flesh of the hairy sheep to that of its more delicate woolly European brother. The skin of the native sheep—a larger and heavier animal than the wool-producing sheep—is very valuable on account of its strength. It is greatly in request by bookbinders.

In the early years of the eighteenth century, perhaps earlier, the Dutch endeavoured to encourage the production of wool as an industry by importing wool-sheep, but the people thought the wool a poor compensation for the flesh and fat of the native animal. In 1790, Colonel Gordon, an officer in the service of the Dutch East India Company, introduced into the Colony a number of woolled sheep. These had been presented by the King of Spain to the Government of Holland. The majority were distributed amongst the farmers and mingled with the native sheep; the minority—twenty-nine—were "disposed of by sale, taken on to Australia by the English warships *Reliance* and *Supply*, and became the original progenitors of the many millions of fine-woolled sheep for which Australia is now renowned." It is a decidedly interesting fact to know that amongst the very first sheep sent to Australia were sheep from South Africa.

At the beginning of the present century, after the English conquest, great efforts were made by the British Government to promote the wool industry in the Colony, and stringent laws were promulgated, owing to Earl Caledon's influence, actually prohibiting

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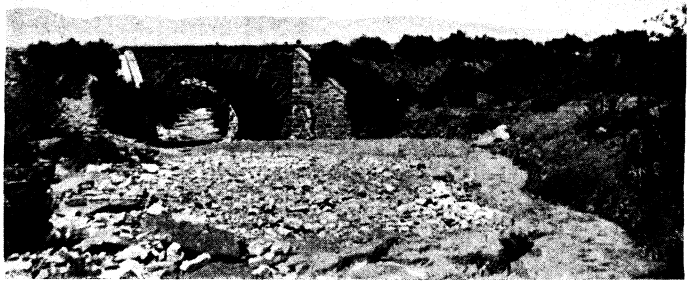
farmers from keeping the native sheep. But all to no purpose; wool-growing as an industry was a failure.



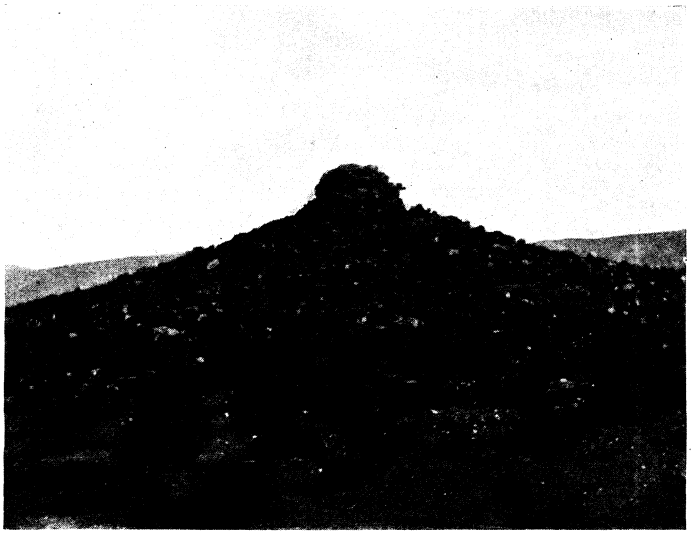
A KAROO SCENE.

After the British settlers of 1820 had got upon their feet, some of them attempted to introduce wool-sheep, and were successful, but it was not until after the emancipation of the slaves that sheep-farming and wool-growing became matters of importance. After the freeing of the slaves men were compelled to dispense with much labour, and agriculture gave place to sheep-breeding. It was found to pay, and became the most important pastoral industry. Different varieties of European sheep were tried until the best and most suitable was found, and there are now distributed over the Colony, in all, some thirteen and a half millions of finely woolled sheep—a sufficient quantity to provide with "all wool" complete suits a number equal to the population of London.

By the time the wool-sheep is acclimatised it has been again and again recrossed, each recrossing inuring the progeny. But then, at the fifth descent rises a new difficulty—the animal develops a tendency to drop its wool, so that it becomes absolutely necessary, if the quality of the wool is to be maintained, to reintroduce the European sheep.

It is not all parts of South Africa that are suitable for sheep-farming. The animal will not thrive where grass is rich and "sour." "Zuurveld," or "sour grass," is found in many parts of the country. It is far less nutritious than Karoo bush or sweet veldt, but tends to become sweeter after being eaten down for some years.

Perhaps the best sheep runs are in the Karoo, and there are now depastured over its plains nearly six millions of fine-woolled sheep, in flocks varying from one thousand five hundred to twenty thousand, besides upwards of two millions of "fat tail" breeds, and numerous herds of goats, cattle, and horses. The Karoo plateau covers an area of one hundred thousand square miles, and supplies a valuable fodder suitable for all descriptions of stock. At the higher elevation, along the slopes of the mountain ranges, grasses abound, while in the valleys



ON THE KAROO NEAR MATJESFONTEIN.

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grass and bush are intermingled, and on the flats aromatic bushes and shrubs prevail. The Karoo bush grows on hot, dry plains where the grass cannot find enough moisture. It is an aromatic little grey-green shrub, standing some eight or ten inches high, and sending down roots to an extraordinary depth. Railway excavations carried to the depth of thirty feet were found to be still above the roots. It possesses a decided advantage over grass, in that it is not hindered by frost in winter; and even in seasons of drought, when it appears only a parched brown stubble, sapless as a worn-out broom, it still affords nourishment to animals. There are many persons to whom the Karoo has a singular attraction. Its sunny sky, its dry, buoyant air, its starry, dewless nights, its vast, unbroken solitude, and even its weird desolateness, have a peculiar charm.

The sheep-runs in South Africa are something different from ordinary pasture in England. The run frequently extends over a tract of country of from five to twenty thousand acres. In many places, where sheep pay best, the run will not bear more than one sheep to two acres, such is the scanty nature of the herbage.

A FINE SPECIMEN OF AN ANGORA RAM.

The sheep-farmers shear their sheep twice a year, and the wool when shorn is usually sold by the owner to the nearest shopkeeper. Sometimes the former takes it to the nearest town. In olden times he usually ran up his account and paid it in wool; now he can often take his wool to some shop further away, where he gets a better price.

The shopkeeper sends it to the nearest railway, just done up in large bales; it is then carried near to the sea-coast, where it is washed. The most important wool-washing centres are Uitenhage, near Port Elizabeth, King Williamstown, near the frontier, the waters here possessing, in a marked degree, the peculiar qualities desirable for the successful operation, and, in the Western Province, the foot of Michell's Pass in the Tulbagh Basin, one of the loveliest places in the world. Fleece-washed wool is wool washed on the sheep some three weeks before shearing, the interim allowing the natural grease of the sheep to rise again, as it is very necessary that the wool should contain a certain quantity of this grease when offered for sale.

After the sheep have been washed they are turned into a dry and clean enclosure and there left for a time. The shorn wool, when washed, is dried by rotary machinery, regulated to a set speed that allows of a certain amount of oil remaining in the wool. It is then tightly bound with iron bands and pressed by hydraulic force until it occupies about one-sixth of the space, for the convenience of storing in the ship's hold. It is then ready for export.

The washeries near Port Elizabeth number nine or ten. The works employ about five hundred coloured and a good number of white labourers, and are capable of treating nearly 50,000 bales yearly. All the washeries throughout the Colony are worked by steam-

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power, and the process is everywhere the same, the wool being first soaked in hot water and then rushed through cold water drums. When clean it is turned out on large drying grounds carefully paved with smooth pebbles, and the effect of the African sun gives it, more surely than any artificial process, that brilliant whiteness for which it is famous.

Two of the photos here reproduced illustrate the Wool Market at Port Elizabeth. The bales exhibited may contain many qualities, so every bale is cut open and a portion of the contents of each displayed for the examination of would-be buyers. These bales contain unwashed and unpressed wool, and weigh from one to three hundred pounds each. One illustration depicts the *free* fleece—*i.e.*, not packed in bales. It sometimes happens that, if the wool has only a short distance to travel, say twenty miles, it is brought into the market in sacks. Port Elizabeth is the principal place of exportation for wool, because all from the Free State and the Transvaal is brought there. From East London, Cape Town, Mossel Bay, and Port Natal quantities of wool are also shipped.

Most of the wool in Port Elizabeth is sold by private contract, but there are weekly auction sales in a large, well-constructed market-building, where a good deal of business is done.

The wool-growing industry in South Africa has many enemies. The first of these is the burrweed, *Xanthium Spinosum*. This plant was introduced many years ago to South Africa, no one knows how—though all know it is not a native of the country—and spread with amazing rapidity. The burrs get into the wool and make it almost valueless, as they can't be got out. Great efforts, aided by special legislation, are made to do away with it, but they are not entirely successful, on account of its rapid growth and the fact that it springs up in unknown places.

The second enemy against which the wool-farmer has to contend is the scab. This is an animal parasite, rendering the wool valueless and frequently killing the sheep. The climate is, unfortunately, helpful to the disease. Various remedies are in use, principally washes—some are made with tobacco and others with poisonous compounds—and scab can be checked. There is a Compulsory Scab Act in force in Cape Colony, but it

THE WOOL MARKET AT PORT ELIZABETH.

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AN AUCTION IN THE WOOL MARKET AT PORT ELIZABETH.

meets with a great deal of opposition in certain localities, particularly in the North-West district, where it is found impossible to carry it out owing to the objections of the farmers. In some parts it must be admitted these objections are not baseless. For instance, where there is only sufficient water for the sheep to drink it is impossible to wash them. Then, again, game is also subject to the disease, and cannot, of necessity, be washed. Where it has proved possible to carry out the provisions of the Act, it has been found to work advantageously. The African farmer cannot be taught by precept, but only by example. To see a good device is, with him, to adopt it if he sees it successful; but he must see the success. It's of no use merely telling him about it.

The third difficulty advanced by the farmer is the delicacy of the woolly sheep, which is subject to innumerable disorders. It often happens that nearly all the lambs of the season will die; at other times disease will carry off large portions of the flock. During severe droughts the losses in live stock are extremely heavy, but when the rain falls in sufficient quantity there is a general resurrection of the vegetation.

Finding, then, how delicate an animal the wool sheep really is, it is not to be wondered at that the African farmer regards with animosity an Act the application of which he believes likely further to endanger the life of the sensitive creature. The temptation to breed the native "fat-tailed" Cape sheep is necessarily strong, it being a very much hardier animal, and less likely to fall a prey to disease.

The daily life of the South African sheep-farmer is not all dark-hued. It may be confidently asserted that he takes it pretty easily, getting from it his full share of enjoyment. In the morning he will send his sheep out with a native herd, and in the evening, when they return, he counts them as they pass into the kraal—by no means so easy a task as one would conjecture—and, unless native depredators come down in the night, of course he finds them all there in the morning.

In olden times, when there were no fences in the land, it was necessary to bring the sheep home every night and put them in kraals; but now that fencing is fairly common, in many places they are allowed to sleep out in the veldt—this is an advantage both to the flocks and their owners. The sheep-kraals are rough enclosures constructed sometimes of stone, flat slate slabs being abundant in most localities, or built up from the sheep refuse which is taken from the kraal.

In writing upon the wool industry of Cape Colony it is permissible to introduce the subject of the Angora goat—an animal found upon almost all sheep-farms. When the Europeans first visited South Africa they found sheep in the parts inhabited by the Hottentots, and goats in parts inhabited by the Bantu. The native goat was a coarse

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animal, not unlike an English goat, but larger and thinner and stronger. The flesh was used, as it is now, for meat, and the skin, then as now, was reckoned of great value on account of its toughness. It had nothing else of commercial value but its meat and skin. Within the last half century the long-haired goat, usually called the Angora, has been introduced from Western Asia. The Angora is a smaller animal than the native goat, but fuller in body, and produces a long and fine hair, very valuable to manufacturers. It is, like the imported sheep, a much more delicate animal and more subject to disease than the native animal, but it is found to answer as well in some parts. It does pretty well in the same districts as the sheep, Somerset East and the adjoining districts being a great goat-farming place. As there are two distinct races of sheep in the Colony, so there are two distinct races of goats. The common or native goat, and the Angora or Asiatic goat. The common goat of to-day is a very superior animal to that originally found by Colonists in possession of the natives. The improvement in size and appearance has been effected by repeated importations of superior goats of the common varieties from Europe.

MATJESFONTEIN.

Mr. D. Hutcheon, of South Africa, an acknowledged authority, says the common goats are very hardy animals, grow to a large size and multiply very rapidly; hence they are about the most profitable stock which a farmer can raise in districts where there is a demand for their mutton. For a poor farmer who has only a small flock of sheep, the common goat is the most economical slaughter animal for his household consumption. Their mutton is a little coarse and stronger than that of the sheep, or even the Angora goat; but when properly prepared it is wholesome and palatable. During a long drought in some of the dry Karoo districts they are often the only kind of stock in a condition fit for the butcher. These goats are a necessary adjunct to the sheep-farm, where they perform the function, in great part, of sheep-dogs, only instead of driving the flocks they lead them. "When a flock of sheep," continues Mr. Hutcheon, "require to be kraaled, or penned, for any purpose, a couple of kapaters—trained male goats—are employed to lead the flock into these enclosures, which they do very efficiently, walking in front with a stately, dignified gait, as if conscious of the important duty they are discharging; the sheep crowd in at the gate immediately behind them. It is hardly possible to estimate the saving of both time and temper which a few well-trained common goats will effect on a large sheep-farm at times of shearing, dipping, dosing, or dressing, when portions of the flock of sheep require to be led in succession into a small and strange enclosure, to be caught, while their services in leading flocks of sheep which have to travel long distances through the Colony, crossing rivers, etc., are simply indispensable. I have seen two such leading kapaters, or 'voorloopers,' as they are called, take a large flock of sheep through a good-sized river in sections of one hundred or more at a time. The plan adopted was for one man to stand on each side of the drift. The goats were launched into the river, with as many of the sheep as could be got to follow them. As soon as the goats reached the other side, the man standing there caught them and held them until the sheep swimming after

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them had reached *terra firma;* he then turned the goats' heads to the river, which they immediately recrossed, to be caught again and relaunched with another consignment of the flock; and this was repeated until the whole flock, numbering about two thousand sheep, was safely led across the river."

Great difficulties attended the introduction of the fine-haired varieties of Angora goats into the Colony. There are to-day three distinct types or varieties of this goat in South Africa. The first is a small animal with a moderate weight of fleece. This is distinguished as the fine, lustrous, silky-fleeced goat, and produces most valuable hair. The second variety is a larger animal, with a very heavy fleece and strong, heavy hair; and the third variety is the oily goat, so called on account of a sebaceous secretion from its skin, which, on the hair, presents a greasy appearance.

The Angora goat of the Colony has beautiful white hair and small horns. It is a very aristocratic-looking creature, and very unlike any goat that can be seen in this country. During the thirty-five years that Angora goat-farming has been established the extension of the industry has been satisfactory. According to the last census returns, there are now over three millions of Angora goats in the Colony, but only a comparatively small number of these are of pure descent, the majority being the progeny of common native goats and pure-bred Angoras.

The official Handbook of South Africa, published at Cape Town and Johannesburg, calls attention to the fact that "although the Colony has made good strides in the production of the raw material, it has done little towards turning its wool into use for wearing apparel."

It is true that some years ago money rewards were offered by the Legislature when a certain quantity of material had been produced, and Colonials got as far as starting a factory in Grahamstown for the manufacture of tweeds, but it eventually succumbed from want of means. But, in spite of Government incentive, there is only one factory in existence to-day, and that transforms the common wools into strong blankets. The old spinning-wheel and the patent spinning-granny—long since driven from this land by the mighty mechanism and steam of our great mills—would find profitable and ceaseless employment in Cape Colony, as there is scarcely a woman in the country able to convert the wool grown on her sheep into yarn.

HEAVY-FLEECED ANGORA GOATS.

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SOME FOOTBALL FAVOURITES.

By C. B. Fry.

THERE is nowadays an unlimited field from which to select fine football players. Two or three teams could be picked without including a man beneath International form. No wonder there is so much cavil at the International teams actually picked, and no wonder each man selected is well worth his place. Everyone has his opinion. We have ours; so let us choose a back division after our own heart. First let us look for our half-backs, for the halves are the most important part of a side; they are, in one, the nucleus, the backbone,

W. J. OAKLEY.
Photo by Hills & Saunders.

the very vitals of a side. Given good halves, you have, other members being equal, a highly developed organism; with bad halves, an invertebrate, a floppy protoplasm only just alive. Unassisted and unfed by the half-backs, an ideal set of forwards can do but little; like an army cut off from communication and transport, they are clipped and shorn of two-thirds of their power. Unaided by the halves, the backs are at the mercy of an opposing line of good forwards; the moment a half fails in his duty the backs are outnumbered and at a disadvantage. Against a man with the ball a would-be tackler always has the odds against him, since he does not know his adversary's intentions; and if it is two to one in favour of the man in possession, how much longer the odds when he has an unhampered comrade ready to receive a pass. As sure as ever the halves are a beaten line, the loss of goals is only a question of time—in good football. The backs and goalkeeper may do prodigies of valour and skill, but there comes the inevitable moment when a clever forward, unmarked at easy range, bangs the ball into the net. The whole secret of a strong defence lies in effectual co-operation between backs and halves; the halves must so perform their task that the backs in every bout of clearing have the odds in their favour. Any back who has played behind both strong and weak halves knows what this means. In the one case his path is smooth, his plans are mapped out for him, most of his kicks are free and unimpeded; in the other, he is in difficulties at every turn, he has continually to choose between a risky rush and a disadvantageous retirement.

What a pleasure to play behind Needham, Crawshaw, and Crabtree! That is, perhaps, the best trio, though there are several other superlative halves, such as Forman and Booth.

Crawshaw, the famous centre-half of Sheffield Wednesday, is probably the best man in that position now playing. Among so many fine performers this one has genius, a perfect instinct for the game. The half-backs have the most difficult positions in the field, and centre-half has a task half as heavy again as the other two. Crawshaw is tall and strongly built without being heavy; he is all muscle and elasticity. Cunning of foot as a ballet-dancer, clever of head as a circus-clown, he does what he chooses with the ball. He is a raking, daring tackler; with a rush and a swoop and a sprawl he spread-eagles his man and emerges cool and alert with the ball, only to get rid of it on sight to the best advantage. When the adversary is attacking he pins and smothers the opposing centre-forward, yet somehow has time to baulk and hamper the two insides. When his own side are down the field he is close up with the forwards, backing them up, ready to take a

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pass-back, and, if possible, draw one of the opposing halves before repassing. Is he very fast? It matters not; he is quick to start and to turn and to double, and he has an amazing knack of being always at the right instant in the right place. He is always on the ball; it follows him about; but he does not seem to waste energy or volunteer interference outside his allotted region. His wary dash, cunning alacrity, ready eye, and unerring judgment make him a grand centre-half, an almost perfect centre-piece of a side.

But on his left in Ernest Needham there is, if a centre and a left half-back can be compared, an even better player. One way and another Needham is about the most accomplished half that has yet appeared; he equals the best in skill and soundness, surpasses all in versatility and polish. Stocky and compact in build, he is as nimble and active as a cheetah. His forehead is like a small steel ram to head the ball; his neck as sturdy as that of a prize Alderney bull; he is marvellously strong upon his stout, clean legs and has a choice little foot that can punch with the force and nicety of a steam-hammer. He can tackle as surely as Wreford-Brown, kick as hard as Williams, pass with G. O. Smith's accuracy, dribble as neatly as Cobbold, and is withal as safe and sound as Forrest. He can play in any position with more than ordinary first-class form; but half is his place. Ubiquitous, persistent, and cool, he does three men's work without neglecting his own. If he fails to intercept a pass or get first to the ball he is down on the possessor in an instant and five times out of six dispossesses him with a clever turn and twist. His 'cute foot will hook out the ball from any jumble, and when he has the ball he never fails to draw an opponent before passing; often, too, he emerges among the forwards and goes down the field as one of them. He rarely fails to pass with delicate accuracy to the right man. He can shoot with rare skill, and, indeed, scores as many goals as most inside forwards. Strongly individual in style, he is nevertheless a perfect organic member of a team.

Crabtree is our other half, and a fine performer. Some might even regard him as attaining the abnormal standard of the other two; at any rate, he is a colleague by no means unworthy of them. All that a half-back need, he can do. He is an untiring worker, a player of unimpeachable judgment.

Behind this line our backs will find themselves in no straits save of their own making. All backs make mistakes if continually hard pressed, especially when ground and ball are wet and slippery; but our pair are not likely to be hard pressed—the halves will see to that. Still, the first requisite in a back is safety, so we must find a safe pair. Here there is no difficulty; half a dozen names jump to our mind's eye, all of them synonymous with sure tackling and certain kicking.

But to suit our company we want something more—two who supplement a power of clearing effectually by a knowledge of how to play a combined game with their halves, and how, on every possible

CRAWSHAW.
Photo by Thiele & Co., Chancery Lane.

opportunity, to feed the forwards. We want strong kicking, but we want in addition low, accurate, nicely measured kicking. High gallery stuff does for the crowd to cheer, but the forwards we shall presently pick will despise it; they want a back to think not of his own glory, but of their convenience. Their choice will fall upon W. J. Oakley and, if recovered from his injury, upon L. V. Lodge.

Oakley and Lodge are an ideal pair. Each has a style of his own. Oakley, lengthy of limb and sweeping of stride, is cool and calculating; he waits on his man and scarcely ever rushes. But his tackling is

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certain and brilliant; faster than most forwards, he is rarely passed and still more rarely beaten; out goes his long leg round ball and man and all, the man is swept aside, and the ball remains at Oakley's feet. Slam it anywhere? Not he; his steel-grey eye has picked the spot and there the ball swings, straight and low.

FOULKE.
Photo by Thiele & Co., Chancery Lane.

He never plays tricks, never dribbles, and is never showy. He uses his head ably; his stature gives him a happy advantage. In all circumstances he knows exactly what needs doing, exactly what he can do, and this he does. His decision and judgment are perfect.

Lodge's methods are more summary and dashing. Neither so tall nor so heavy as his comrade, but almost as strong and fast, he hurtles at his man and through him. In spite of his rushing tactics he seems never to miss his object; yet his pace enables him to correct an occasional error. His uncompromising dash renders him a most attractive player to watch and a fearsome player to meet. Few forwards can stand against his rush. He is a brilliant, loose-limbed kicker; strong and accurate as Oakley, less nice in height and flight, but neater. His head-work is a revelation; anywhere and everywhere his ruddy brow bounces out at the ball like a prizefighter's fist, banging it away some twenty yards or more. Oakley's calm forehead and Lodge's fiery pate clear the goal-mouth better than a score of feet.

But who is the lucky goaler behind two such lines of defence? Robinson, Foulke, Clawley, Sutcliffe, or Campbell—any of these would do. Perhaps, intrinsically, the first-named is the best; he is wonderfully active and brilliantly safe. He can catch, and kick, and punt; sprawl, run out, and wrestle; he is cool and deliberate, yet quick and nimble, something of a contortionist, almost an acrobat, quite a gymnast. What a wicket-keeper lost, with his eye for where to put his hands and with his hands for holding!

Sutcliffe and Foulke are, in a more solid style, almost equally skilful, though they have not quite the same faculty—nay, genius—for making possible what till done was impossible. Foulke is no small part of a mountain; you cannot bundle him through, ball and all; you cannot surprise or humbug him. He, too, has a touch of genius, and, in spite of a suspicion of eagerness, makes a last defence that is almost impregnable. Clawley is as sound as a bell, and, though not showy, a goaler of the highest rank; with some of Moon's style, his form is only just inferior to that of the famous Corinthian in his prime. And Campbell, the present Corinthian goalkeeper, is a worthy successor of Moon and Gay. None is quicker, none with a keener instinct for the ball's direction. He inhabits every square foot of his charge with the vitality of live india-rubber and the accurate agility of a cat. He or any of the others will form a worthy complement of our defence—a defence which hostile forwards should find as difficult to penetrate as the French fleet to enter Portsmouth harbour.

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JOAN OF THE SWORD.

By S. R. Crockett.*

Illustrated by Frank Richards.

SYNOPSIS OF FOREGOING CHAPTERS.

In the preceding chapters we are introduced to the Duchess Joan of Hohenstein, in Castle Kernsberg, who is twenty-one years old and is a keen and accomplished swordswoman. She is bound by the decree of her father, anxious to unite the two States, either to marry Prince Louis of Courtland or to forfeit her dominion. In order to see her affianced husband unknown to him, Joan, who is very impetuous, dons masculine dress and pays an incognito visit to Courtland, disguised as a secretary named "Johann Pyrmont." Here she makes the acquaintance of Princess Margaret of Courtland, who introduces the secretary to her brother, and is herself greatly fascinated by the young man's looks and ingenuousness. She promptly discards her former cavalier, a Muscovite Prince, who is mad with jealousy. "Johann," however, is much confused by the double *rôle* that is necessary in order to preserve the secret of her identity, though she is most favourably impressed with the glimpse she has of the man whom she regards as her future husband. The Muscovite Prince, having challenged the secretary to a duel, is seriously wounded for his pains. In due course Joan proceeds to Courtland as a bride. Owing to an attack of illness, Prince Louis is unable to see her until they meet at the altar, when, to Joan's dismay, she finds that the Prince whose memory she has been cherishing so happily is but Prince Conrad, the younger brother and the bishop who is to marry her, while the bridegroom is a man as repellent and ill-favoured as his brother is attractive. Joan at first refuses to marry him, but eventually yields to Princess Margaret's persuasion. On the steps of the cathedral, however, she suddenly withdraws from her husband, telling him she has fulfilled the letter of the contract, but will have no more to do with him. Hastily springing to her horse, she rides out of the city, followed by her horsemen, saying: "We ride back to Kernsberg. Joan of the Sword Hand is wed, but not yet won. If they would keep her they must first catch her!"

CHAPTER XV.

WHAT JOAN LEFT BEHIND.

After the departure of his bride, the Prince of Courtland stood on the steps of the minster, dazed and foundered by the shame which had so suddenly befallen him. Beneath him the people seethed tumultuously, their holiday ribands and maypole dresses making as gay a swirl of colour as when one looks at the sun through the facets of cut Venetian glass. Prince Louis's weak and fretful face worked with emotion. His bird-like hands clawed uncertainly at his sword-hilt, wandering off over the golden pouches that tasselled his baldric till they rested on the sheath of the poignard he wore.

"Bid the gates be shut, Prince!" The whisper came over his shoulder from a young man who had been standing all the time twisting his moustache. "Bid your horsemen bit and bridle. The plain is fair before you. It is a long way to Kernsberg. I have a hundred Muscovites at your service, all well mounted—ten thousand behind them over the frontier if these are not enough! Let no wench in the world put this shame upon a reigning Prince of Courtland upon his wedding-day!"

Thus Ivan of Muscovy, attired in silk, banded of black and gold, counselled the disdained Prince Louis, who stood pushing upward with two fingers the point of his thin greyish beard and gnawing its straggling ends between his teeth.

"I say, 'To horse and ride, man!' Will you dare tell this folk of yours that you are disdained, slighted at the very church door by your wedded wife, cast off and trodden in the mire like a bursten glove? Can you proclaim yourself the scorn of Germany? How it will run, that news! To Plassenburg first, where the Executioner's Son will smile triumphantly to his witch wife, and straightway send off a messenger to tickle the well-larded ribs of his friend the Margraf George with the rare jest."

The Prince Louis appeared to be moved by Prince Wasp's words. He turned about to the nearest knight-in-waiting.

"Let us to horse—every man of us!" he said. "Bid that the steeds be brought instantly."

The banded Wasp had further counsels to give.

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"Give out that you go to meet the Princess at a rendezvous. For a pleasantry between yourselves, you have resolved to spend the honeymoon at a distant hunting-lodge. Quick! Not half a dozen of all the company caught the true import of her words. You will tame her yet. She will founder her horses in a single day's ride, while you have relays along the road at every castle, at every farm-house, and your borders are fifty good miles away."

Beneath, in the square, the court jesters leaped and laughed, turning somersaults and making a flying skirt, like that of a morrice dancer, out of the long, flapping points of their parti-coloured blouses. The streets in front of the cathedral were alive with musicians, mostly in little bands of three, a harper with his harp of fourteen strings, his companion playing industriously upon a flute English, and with these two their 'prentice, or servitor, who accompanied them with shrill iterance of whistle, while his hands busied themselves with the merry tuck of tabour.

In this incessant merrymaking the people soon forgot their astonishment at the sudden disappearance of the bride. There was, indeed, no understanding these great folk. But it was a fine day for a feast—the pretext a good one. And so the lasses and lads joked as they danced in the lower vaults of the town-house, from which the barrels had been cleared for the occasion.

"If thou and I were thus wedded, Grete, would you ride one way and I the other? Nay, God wot, lass! I am but a tanner's 'prentice, but I'd abide beside thee, as close as bark by hide that lies three years in the same tan-pit—aye, an' that I would, lass!"

Then Gretchen bridled, "I would not marry thee nor yet lie near or far, Hans; thou art but a boy, feckless and skill-less save to pole about thy stinking skins—faugh!"

"Nay, try me, Grete! Is not this kiss as sweet as any civet-scented fop could give?"

At the command of the Prince the trumpets rang out again the "Boot-and-saddle!" from the steps of the cathedral. At the sound the grooms, who were here and there in the press, hasted to find and caparison the horses of their lords. Meanwhile, on the wide steps the Prince Louis fretted, dinting his nails restlessly into his palms and shaking with anger and disappointment till his deep sleeves shook like scarlet flames in a veering wind.

Suddenly there passed a wave over the people who crowded the spacious Dom Platz of Courtland. The turmoil stilled itself unconsciously. The many-headed, parti-coloured throng of women's tall coifs, gay fluttering ribands, men's velvet caps, gallants' white feathers that shifted like the permutations of a kaleidoscope, all at once fixed itself into a sea of white faces, from which presently arose a forest of arms, flourishing kerchiefs and tossing caps. To this succeeded a deep mouth-roar of burgherish welcome such as the reigning Prince had never heard raised in his own honour.

"Conrad—Prince Conrad! God bless our Prince-Cardinal!"

The legitimate ruler of Courtland, standing where Joan had left him, with his slim-waisted Muscovite mentor behind him, half-turned to look. And there on the highest place stood his brother in the scarlet of his new dignity as it had come from the Pope himself, his red biretta held in his hand, and his fair and noble head erect as he looked over the folk to where on the slope above the city gates he could still see the sun glint and sparkle on the cuirasses and lanceheads of the four hundred riders of Kernsberg.

But even as the Prince of Courtland looked back at his brother, the whisper of the tempter smote the latter's ear.

"Had Prince Conrad been in your place, and you behind the altar rails, think you that the Duchess Joan would have fled so cavalierly?"

By this time the young Cardinal had descended till he stood on the other side of the Prince from Ivan of Muscovy.

"You take horse to follow your bride?" he queried, smiling. "Is it a fashion of Kernsberg brides thus to steal away?" For he could see the grooms bringing horses into the square, and the guards beating the people back with the butts of their spears to make room for the mounting of the Prince's cavalcade.

"Hark—he flouts you!" came the whisper over the bridegroom's shoulder; "I warrant he knew of this before."

"You have done your priest's work, brother," said Louis coldly, "e'en permit me to do that of a prince in my own way."

The Cardinal bowed low, but with great self-command held his peace, whereat Louis of Courtland broke out in a sudden over-boiling fury.

"This is your doing!" he cried; "I know it well. From her first coming my bride had set herself to scorn me. My sister knew it. You knew it. You smile as at a jest.

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"'What in Heaven's name is the meaning of all this?' he was saying."

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The Pope's favour has turned your head. You would have all—the love of my wife, the rule of my folk, as well as the acclaim of these city swine. Listen—'The good Prince Conrad! God save the noble Prince!' It is worth living for favour such as this."

"Brother of mine," said the young man gently, "as you know well, I never set eyes upon the noble Lady Joan before. Never spoke word to her, held no communication by word or pen."

"Von Dessauer—his secretary!" whispered Ivan, dropping the suggestion carefully over his shoulder like poison distilled into a cup.

"You were constantly with the old fox Dessauer, the envoy of Plassenburg—who came from Kernsberg, bringing with him that slim secretary. By my faith, now, when I think of it, Prince Ivan told me last night he was as like this madcap girl as pea to pea—some fly-blown bastard brother, doubtless!"

Conrad shook his head. His brother had doubtless gone momentarily distract with his troubles.

"Nay, deny it not! And smile not either—lest I spoil the symmetry of that face for your monkish mummery and processions. Aye, if I have to underlie ten years' interdict for it from your friend the most Holy Pope of Rome!"

"Do not forget there is another church in my country, which will lay no interdict upon you, Prince Louis," laughed Ivan of Muscovy. "But to horse—we lose time!"

"Brother," said the Cardinal, laying his hand on his brother's arm, "on my word as a knight—as a Prince of the Church—I knew nothing of the matter. I cannot even guess what has led you thus to accuse me!"

The Princess Margaret came at that moment out of the Cathedral and ran impetuously to her favourite brother.

He put out his hand. She took it, and instead of kissing his bishop's ring, as in strict etiquette she ought to have done, she cried out, "Conrad, do you know what that glorious wench has done? Dared her husband's authority at the church door, leaped into the saddle, whistled up her men, cried to all these Courtland gallants, 'Catch me who can!' and lo! at this moment she is riding straight for Kernsberg, and now our Louis must catch her. A glorious wedding! I would I had been by her side. Brother Louis, you need not frown, I am nowise affrighted at your glooms! This is a bride worth fighting for. No puling cloister-maid that dares not raise her eyes higher than her bridegroom's knee. Were I a man, by my faith, I would never eat nor drink, neither pray nor sain me, till I tamed the darling and brought her to my wrist like a falcon to a lure!"

"So then, madam, you knew of this?" said her elder brother, glowering upon her from beneath his heavy brows.

"Nay!" trilled the gay Princess, "I only wish I had. Then I, too, would have been riding with them – such a jest as never was, it would have been. Good-bye, my forsaken brother! Joy be with you on this your bridal journey. Take Prince Ivan with you, and Conrad and I will keep the kingdom against your return with your prize gentled on your wrist."

So, smiling and kissing her hand the Princess Margaret waved her brother and Prince Ivan off. The Prince of Courtland neither looked at her nor answered. But the Muscovite turned often in his saddle as if to carry with him the picture she made of saucy countenance and dainty figure as she stood looking up into the face of the Cardinal Prince Conrad.

"What in Heaven's name is the meaning of all this—I do not understand in the least?" he was saying.

"Haste you and unrobe, Brother Con," she said; "this grandeur of yours daunts me. Then, in the summer parlour, I will tell you all!"

CHAPTER XVI.

PRINCE WASP'S COMPACT.

"I CANNOT go back to Courtland dishonoured," said Prince Louis to Ivan of Muscovy, as they stood on the green bank looking down on the rushing river, broad and brown, which had so lately been the Fords of Alla. The river had risen almost as it seemed upon the very heels of the four hundred horsemen of Kernsberg, and the ironclad knights and men-at-arms who followed the Prince of Courtland could not face the yeasty swirl of the flood.

Prince Ivan, left to himself, would have dared it.

"What is a little brown water?" he cried. "Let the men leave their armour on this side and swim their horses through. We do it fifty times a month in Muscovy in the springtime. And what are your hill-fed brooks to the full-bosomed rivers of the Great Plain?"

"It is just because they are hill-fed that we know them and will not risk our lives. The Alla has come down out of the mountains

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of Hohenstein. For four-and-twenty hours nothing without wing may pass and repass. Yet an hour earlier and our Duchess had been trapped on the hither side even as we. But now she will sit and laugh up there in Kernsberg. And—I cannot go back to Courtland without a bride!"

Prince Ivan stood a moment silent. Then his eyes glanced over his companion with a certain severe and amused curiosity. From foot to head they scanned him, beginning at his shoes of red Cordovan leather, following upwards to the great tassel he wore at his poignard; then came the golden girdle about his waist, the flowered needlework at his wrists and neck, and the scrutiny ended with the flat red cap on his head, from which a white feather nodded over his left eye.

A COURTLAND INFANTRY MAN.

Then the gaze of Prince Ivan returned again slowly to the pointed red shoes of Cordovan leather.

If there was anything so contemptuous as that eye-blink in the open scorn of all the burghers of Courtland, Prince Louis was to be excused for any hesitation in facing his subjects.

The matter of Prince Wasp's meditation ran somewhat thuswise: "Thou man, fashioned from a scullion's nail-paring, and cocked upon a horse, what can I make of thee? Thou, to have a country, a crown, a wife! Gudgeon eats stickleback, jack-pike eats gudgeon and grows fat, till at the last the sturgeon in his armour eats him. I will fatten this jack. I will feed him like the gudgeons of Kernsberg and Hohenstein, baited with a dainty fly indeed, black-tipped, with sleeves gay as cranes' wings, and answering to the name of 'my lady Joan.' But wait—I must be wary, and have a care lest I shadow his water."

So saying within his heart, Prince Wasp became exceedingly thoughtful and of a demure countenance.

"My lord," he said, "this day's work will not go well down in Courtland, I fear me!"

Prince Louis moved uneasily, keeping his regard steadily upon the brown turmoil of the Alla swirling beneath, whereas the eyes of Ivan never removed from his friend's meagre face.

"Your true Courtlander is more than half a Muscovite," mused Prince Wasp, as if thinking aloud; "he wishes not to be argued with. He wants a master, and he will not love one who permits himself to be choused of a wife upon his wedding-day!"

Prince Louis started quickly as the Wasp's sting touched him.

"And, pray, Prince Ivan," he said, "what could I have done that I have left undone? Speak plainly, since you are so prodigal of smiles suppressed, so witty with covert words and shoulder-tappings!"

"My Louis," said Prince Wasp, laying his hand upon the arm of his companion with an affectation of tenderness, "I flout you not—I mock you not. And if I speak harshly, it is only that I love not to see you in your turn flouted, mocked, scorned, made light of before your own people!"

"I believe it, Ivan; pardon the heat of my hasty temper!" said the Prince of Courtland. The watchful Muscovite pursued his advantage, narrowing his eyes that he might the better note every change on the face of the man whom he held in his toils. He went on, with a certain resigned sadness in his voice—

"Ever since I came first to Courtland with the not dishonourable hope of carrying back to my father a princess of your house, none have been so amiable together as you and I. We have been even as David and Jonathan."

The Prince Louis put out a hand, which apparently Ivan did not see, for he continued without taking it.

"Yet what have I gained either of solid good or even of the lighter but not less agreeable matter of my lady's favour? So far as your sister is concerned, I have wasted my time. If I consider a union of our peoples, already one in heart, your brother works against us both; the Princess Margaret despises me, Prince Conrad thwarts us. He would bind us in chains and carry us tinkling to the feet of his pagan master in Rome!"

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"I think not so," answered Prince Louis —"I cannot think so of my brother, with all his faults. Conrad is a brave soldier, a good knight, though, as is the custom of our house, it is his lot to be no more than a prince-bishop!"

The Wasp laughed a little hard laugh, clear and inhuman as the snap and rattle of Spanish castanets.

"Louis, my good friend, your simplicity, your lack of guile, do you wrong most grievous! You judge others as you yourself are. Do you not see that Conrad your brother must pay for his red hat? He must earn his cardinalate. Papa Sixtus gives nothing for nothing. Courtland must pay Peter's pence, must become monkish land. On every ounce of stockfish, every grain of sturgeon roe, every ounce of marled amber, your Holy Father must levy his sacred dues. And the clear ambition of your brother is to make you chief cat's-paw pontifical. Consider it, good Louis."

And the Prince of Muscovy twirled his moustache and smiled condescendingly between his fingers. Then, as if he thought suddenly of something else and made a new calculation, he laughed a laugh, quick and short as the bark of a dog.

"Ha!" he cried, "truly we order things better in my country. I have brothers, one, two, three. They are grand dukes, highnesses very serene. One of them has this province, another this sinecure, yet another waits on my father. My father dies—and I—well, I am in my father's place. What will my brothers do with their serene highnesses then? They will take each one the clearest road and the shortest for the frontier, or by the Holy Icon of Moscow, there will very speedily be certain new tablets in the funeral vault of my fathers."

The Prince of Courtland started.

"This thing I could never imagine of Conrad my brother. He loves me. He ever cared but for his books, and now that he is a priest he hath forsworn knighthood, and tournaments, and wars."

"Poor Louis," said Ivan sadly, "not to see that once a soldier always a soldier. But 'tis a good fault, a generous blindness of the eyes. He hath already the love of your people. He has won already the voice that speaks from every altar and presbytery. The power to loose and bind men's conscience is in his hand. In a little, when he has bartered away your power for his cardinal's hat, he may be made a greater than yourself, an elector of the empire, the right-hand man of Papa Sixtus, as his uncle Adrian was before him. Then indeed your Courtland will underlie the tinkle of Peter's keys!"

"I am sure that Conrad would do nothing against his fatherland or to the hurt of his prince and brother!" said Prince Louis, but he spoke in a wavering voice, like one more than half convinced.

"Again," continued Ivan, without heeding him, "there is your wife. I am sure that if he had been the prince and you the priest—well, she had not slept this night in the Castle of Kernsberg!"

"Ivan, if you love me, be silent," cried the tortured Prince of Courtland, setting his hand to his brow. "This is mere idle dreaming of a fool. How learned you these things? I mean, how did the thoughts come into your mind?"

"I learned the matter from the Princess Margaret, who in the brief space of a day became your wife's confidante!"

"Did Margaret tell it you?"

The Prince Ivan laughed a short, self-depreciatory laugh.

"Nay, truly," he said, smiling sadly, "you and I are in one despite, Louis. Your wife scorns you—me, my sweetheart. Did Margaret tell me? Nay, verily! Yet I learned it, nevertheless, even more certainly because she denied it so vehemently. But, after all, I daresay all will end for the best."

"How so?" demanded Prince Louis haughtily.

"Why, I have heard that your Papa at Rome will do aught for money. Doubtless he will dissolve this marriage, which indeed is no more than one in name. He has done more than that already for his own nephew. He will absolve your brother from his vows. Then you can be the monk and he the king. There will be a new marriage, at which doubtless you shall hold the service book and he the lady's hand. Then we shall have no ridings back to Kernsberg, with four hundred lances, at a word from a girl's scornful mouth. And the Alla down there may rise or fall at its pleasure, and neither hurt nor hinder any!"

The Prince of Courtland turned an angry countenance upon his friend, but the keen-witted Muscovite looked so kindly and yet so sadly upon him that after awhile the severity of his face relaxed as it had been against his will, and with a quick gesture he added, "I believe you love me, Ivan, though indeed your words are no better than red-hot pincers in my heart."

"Love you, Louis?" cried Prince Ivan. "I

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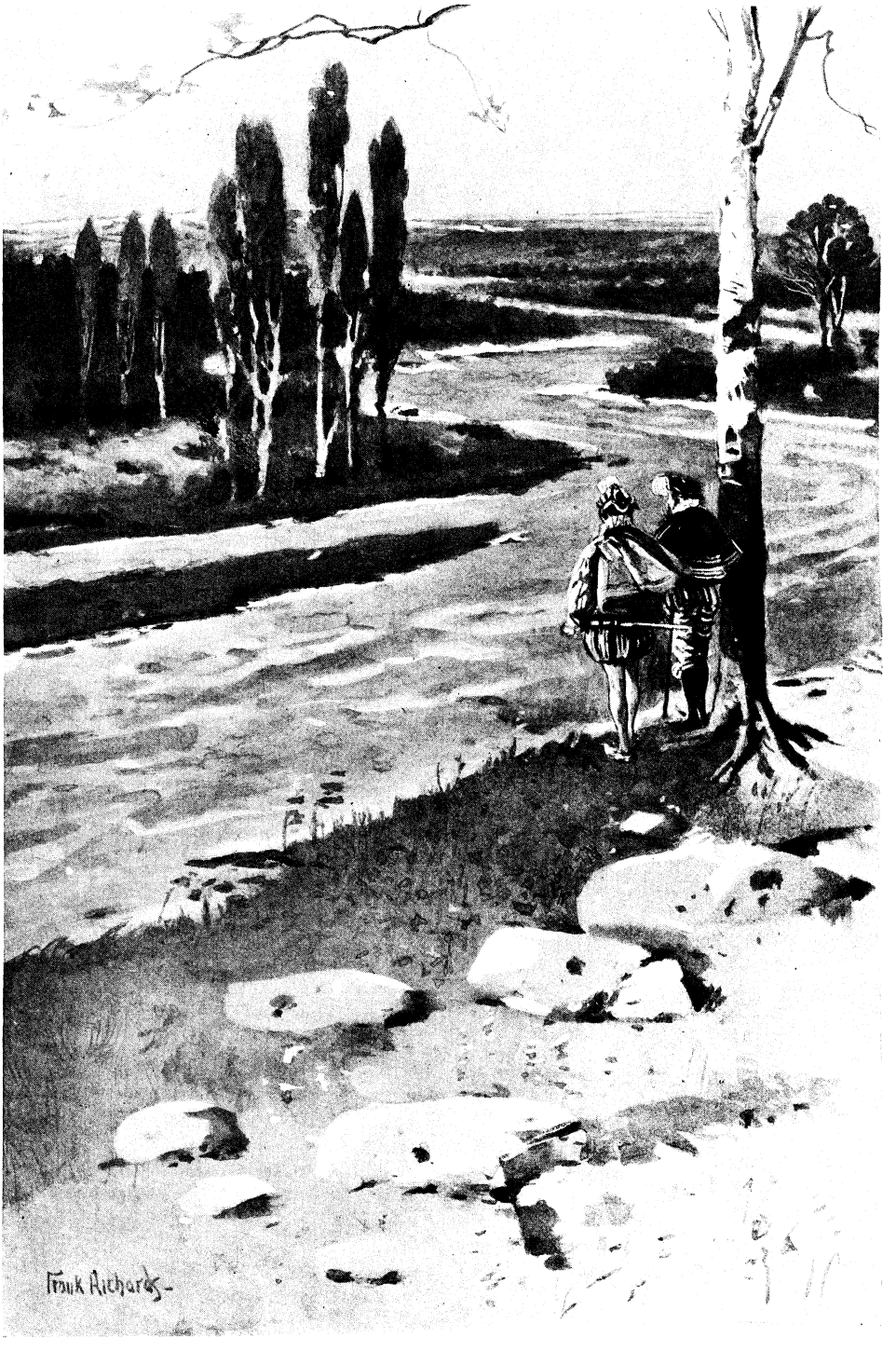

"They stood on the green bank looking down on the rushing river."

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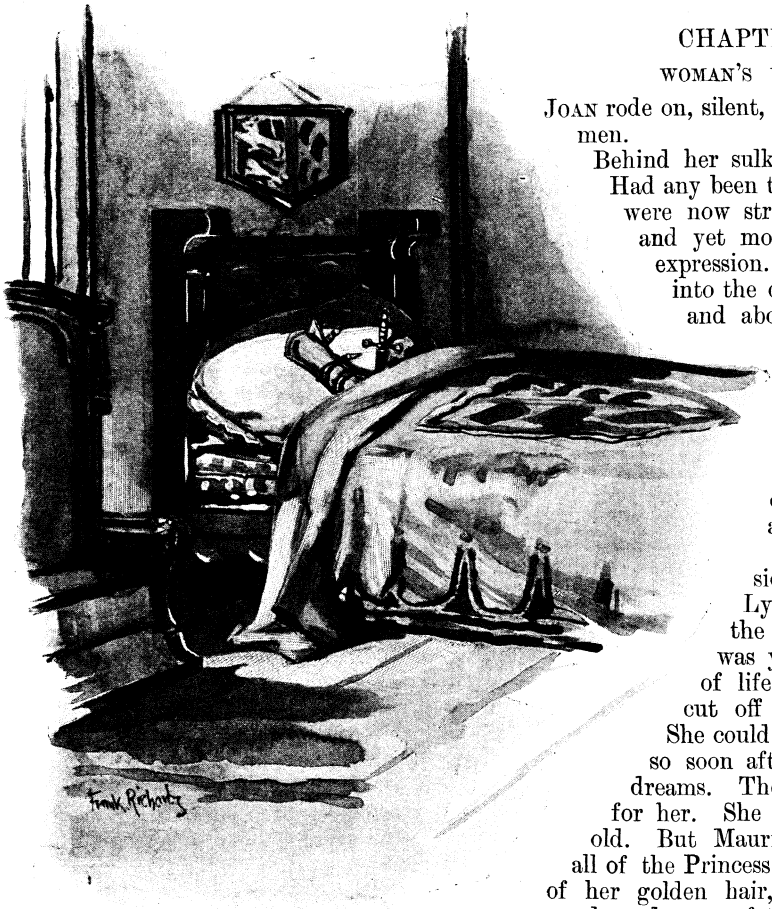
love you better than any brother I have, though they will never live to thwart me as yours thwarts you—better even than my father, for you do not keep me out of my inheritance ! "

Then in a gayer tone he went on.

"I love you so much that I will pledge my father's whole army to help you, first to win your wife, next to take Hohenstein, Kernsberg, and Marienfeld. And after that,



"'There—let the civil power and the military for once lie down together !'"

if you are still ambitious, why—to Plassenburg and the Wolfmark, which now the Executioner's Son holds. That would make a noble kingdom to offer a fair and wilful queen."

"And for this you ask ? "

"Only your love, Louis—only your love ! And, if it please you, the alliance with that Princess of your honourable house, of which we spoke just now ! "

"My sister Margaret, you mean ? I will do what I can, Ivan, but she also is wilful. You know she is wilful ! I cannot compel her love ! "

The Prince Ivan laughed.

"I am not so complaisant as you, Louis, nor yet so modest. Give me my bride on the day Joan of the Sword Hand sleeps in the palace of Courtland as its princess, and I will take my chance of winning our Margaret's love ! "

CHAPTER XVII.

WOMAN'S WILFULNESS.

JOAN rode on, silent, a furlong before all her men.

Behind her sulked Maurice von Lynar. Had any been there to note, their faces were now strangely alike in feature, and yet more curiously unlike in expression. Joan gazed forward into the distance like a soul dead and about to be reborn, planning a new life. Maurice von Lynar looked more like a naughty schoolboy whom some tyrant Fate, rod-wielding, has compelled to obey against his will.

Yet, in spite of expression, it was Maurice von Lynar who was planning the future. Joan's heart was yet too sore. Her tree of life had, as it were, been cut off close to the ground. She could not go back to the old so soon after her blissful year of dreams. There was to be no new life for her. She could not take up the old. But Maurice—his thoughts were all of the Princess Margaret, of the ripple of her golden hair, of her pretty, wilful words and ways, of that dimple on her chin, and, above all, of her threat to seek him out if—but it was not possible that she could mean that. And yet she looked as though she might make good her words. Was it possible ? He posed himself with this question, and for half an hour rode on oblivious of all else.

"Eh ? " he said at last, half conscious that someone had been speaking to him from an infinite distance ; "eh ? Did you speak, Captain von Orseln ? "

Von Orseln grunted out a little laugh, almost silently, indeed, and expressed more

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by a heave of his shoulders than by any alteration of his features.

"Speak, indeed? As if I had not been speaking these five minutes. Well nigh had I stuck my poignard in thy ribs to teach you to mind your superior officer. What think you of this business?"

"Think?" the Sparhawk's disappointment burst out. "Think? Why, 'tis past all thinking. Courtland is shut to us for twenty years."

"Well," laughed Von Orseln, "who cares for that? Castle Kernsberg is good enough for me, so we can hold it."

"Hold it?" cried Maurice, with a kind of joy in his face; "do you think they will come after us?"

Von Orseln nodded approval of his spirit.

"Yes, little man, yes," he said; "if you have been fretting to come to blows with the Courtlanders you shall be satisfied. I would we had only these lumpish Baltic jacks to fear."

Even as they talked Castle Kernsberg floated up like a cloud before them above the blue and misty plain, long before they could distinguish the walls and hundred gables of the town beneath.

But no word spoke Joan till that purple shadow had taken shape as stately stone and lime, and she could discern her own red lion flying abreast of the banner of Louis of Courtland upon the topmost pinnacle of the round tower.

Then on a little mound without the town she halted and faced about. Von Orseln halted the troop with a backward wave of his hand.

"Men of Hohenstein," said the Duchess, in a clear, far-reaching alto, "you have followed me, asking no word of why or wherefore. I have told you nothing, yet is an explanation due to you."

There came the sound as of a hoarse, unanimous muttering among the soldiers. Joan looked at Von Orseln as a sign for him to interpret it.

"They say that they are Joan of the Sword Hand's men, and that they will disembowel any man who wants to know what it may please you to keep secret."

"Aye, or question by so much as a lifted eyebrow aught that it may please your Highness to do," added Captain Peter Balta, from the right of the first troop.

"I said that our Duchess could never live in such a dog's hole as Courtland," quoth George the Hussite, who, before he took service with Henry the Lion, had been a heretic preacher. "In Bohemia, now, where the pines grow——"

"Hold your prate, all of you," growled Von Orseln, "or you will find where hemp grows, and why! My lady," he added, altering his voice as he turned to her, "be assured, no dog in Kernsberg will bark an interrogative. Shall our young Duchess Joan be wived and bedded like some little burgheress that sells laces and tape all day long on the Axel-strasse? Shall the daughter of Henry the Lion be at the commandment of any Bor-Russian boor, an it like her not? Shall she get a burr in her throat with breathing the raw fogs of the Baltic? Not a word, most gracious lady! Explain nothing. Extenuate nothing. It is the will of Joan of the Sword Hand—that is enough; and, by the word of Werner von Orseln, it shall be enough!"

"It is the will of Joan of the Sword Hand! It is enough!" repeated the four hundred lances, like a class that learns a lesson by rote.

A lump rose in Joan's throat as she tried to shape into words the thoughts that surged within her. She felt strangely weak. Her pride was not the same as of old, for the heart of a woman had grown up within her—a heart of flesh. Surely that could not be a tear in her eye? No; the wind blew shrewdly out of the west, to which they were riding. Von Orseln noted the struggle and took up his parable once more.

"The pact is carried out. The lands united—the will of Henry the Lion done! What more? Shall the free Princess be the huswife of a yellow Baltic dwarf? When we go into the town and they ask us, we will say but this, 'Our Lady misliked the fashion of his beard!' That will be reason good and broad and deep, sufficient alike for greybeard carl and prattling bairn!"

"I thank you, noble gentlemen," said Joan. "Now, as you say, let us ride into Kernsberg."

"And pull down that flag!" cried Maurice, pointing to the black Courtland Eagle which flew so steadily beside the coronated lion of Kernsberg and Hohenstein.

"And pray, sir, why?" said Joan of the Sword Hand. "Am I not also Princess of Courtland?"

* * * * *

From woman's wilfulness all things somehow have their beginning. Yet of herself she is content with few things (so that she has what she wants), somewhat Spartan in fare

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if let alone, and no dinner-eating animal. Wine, tobacco, caviare, Strasburg goose-liver—Epicurus's choicest gifts to men of this world—are contemned by womankind. Left to their own devices, they prefer a drench of sweet mead or hydromel laced with water, or even of late the China brew that filters in black bricks through the country of the Muscovite. Nevertheless, to woman's wantings may be traced all restraints and judgments, from the sword flaming every way about Eden-gate to the last merchant declared bankrupt and "dyvour" upon the exchange flags of Hamburg town. Eve did not eat the apple when she got it. She hasted to give it away. She only wanted it because it had been forbidden.

So also Joan of Hohenstein desired to go down with Dessauer that she might look upon the man betrothed to her from birth. She went. She looked, and within her there grew up a heart of flesh. Then, when the stroke fell, that heart uprose in quick, intemperate revolt. And what might have issued in the dull compliance of a Princess whose life was settled for her became the imperious revolt of a woman against an intolerable and loathsome impossibility.

So in her castle of Kernsberg Joan waited. But not idly. All day long and every day Maurice von Lynar rode on her service. The hillmen gathered to his word, and in the courtyard the stormy voices of George the Hussite and Peter Balta were never hushed. The shepherds from the hills went to and fro, marching and countermarching, wheeling and charging, porting musket and thrusting pike, till all Kernsberg was little better than a barracks, and the maidens sat wet-eyed at their knitting by the fire and thought, "Well for her to please herself whom she shall marry—but how about us, with never a lad in the town to whistle us out in the gloaming, or to thumb a pebble against the window-lattice from the deep edges of the ripening corn?"

But there were two, at least, within the realm of the Duchess Joan who knew no drawbacks to their joy, who rubbed palm on palm and nudged each other for pure gladness. These (it is sad to say) were the military *attachés* of the neighbouring peaceful State of Plassenburg. Yet they had been specially cautioned by their Prince Hugo, in the presence of his wife Helene, the hereditary Princess, that they were most carefully to avoid all international complications. They were on no account to take sides in any quarrel. They must do nothing prejudicial to the peace, neutrality, and universal amity of the State and Princedom of Plassenburg. Such were their instructions.

They promised faithfully.

But, their names being Captains Boris and Jorian, they now rubbed their hands and nudged each other. They ought also to have been in their chamber in the Castle of Kernsberg, busily concocting despatches to their master and mistress, giving an account of these momentous happenings.

Instead, how is it that we find them lying on that spur of the Jägernbergen which overlooks the passes of the Alla, watching the gathering of the great storm which in the course of days was to break over the domains of the Duchess Joan—who had refused and slighted her wedded husband, Louis, Prince of Courtland?

Being powerfully resourceful men, long, lean Boris and rotund Jorian had found a way out of the apparent difficulty. There had come with them from Plassenburg a commission written upon an entire square of sheepskin by a secretary and sealed with the seal of Leopold von Dessauer, High Councillor of the United Princedom and Duchy, bearing that "In the name of Hugo and Helene our well-loved lieges Captains Boris and Jorian are empowered to act and treat," and so forth. This momentous deed was tied about the middle with a red string, and presented withal so courtly and respectable an appearance to the uncritical eyes of the ex-men-at-arms themselves, that they felt almost anything excusable which they might do in its name.

Before leaving Kernsberg, Boris placed this great red-waisted parchment roll in his bed, leaning it anglewise against his pillow. Jorian tossed a spare dagger with the arms of Plassenburg beside it.

"There—let the civil power and the military for once lie down together!" he said. "We delegate our authority to these two during our absence."

To the silent Plassenburgers who had accompanied them, and who now kept their door with unswerving attention, Boris explained himself briefly.

"Remember," he said, "when you are asked, that the envoys of Plassenburg are ill—ill of a dangerous and most contagious disease. Also, they are asleep. They must on no account be waked. The windows must be kept darkened. It is a great pity. You are desolated. You understand. The first time I have more money than I can spend you shall have ten marks!"

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The men-at-arms understood, which was no wonder, for Boris generally contrived to make himself very clear. But they thought within them that their chances of financial benefit from their captain's conditional generosity were worth about a stiver.

So these two, being now free fighting men, as it were, soldiers of fortune, lay waiting on the slopes of the Jägernbergen, talking over the situation.

"A man surely has a right to his own wife!" said Jorian, taking for the sake of argument the conventional side.

"*Narren-possen* Jorian!" cried Boris raising his voice to the indignation point. "Clotted nonsense! Who is going to keep a man's wife for him if he cannot do it himself? And he a prince, and within his own city and fortress, too. She boxed his ears, they say, and rode away, telling him that if he wanted her he might come and take her! A pretty spirit, i' faith! Too good for such a dried stockfish of the Baltic, with not so much spirit as a speckled flounder on his own mud-flats! Faith! if I were a marrying man, I would run off with the lass myself. She ought at least to be a soldier's wife."

"The trouble is that so far she feels no necessity to be anyone's wife," said Jorian, shifting his ground.

"The maidens sat wet-eyed at their knitting by the fire."

"That also is nonsense," said Boris, who, spite his defence of Joan, held the usual masculine views. "Every woman wishes to marry, if she can only have first choice."

"There they come!" whispered Jorian, whose eyes had never wandered from the long, wavering lines of willow and alder which marked the courses of the sluggish streams flowing east towards the Alla.

Boris rose to his feet and looked long beneath his hand. Very far away there was a sort of white tremulousness in the atmosphere which after a while began to give off little luminous glints and sparkles, as the sea does when a shaft of moonlight touches it through a dark canopy of cloud.

Then there arose from the level green plain first one tall column of dense black smoke and then another, till as far as they could see to the left the plain was full of them.

"God's truth!" cried Jorian, "they are burning the farms and herds' houses. I thought they had been Christians in Courtland. But these are more like Duke Casimir's devil's tricks."

Boris did not immediately answer. His eyes were busy seeing, his brain setting in order.

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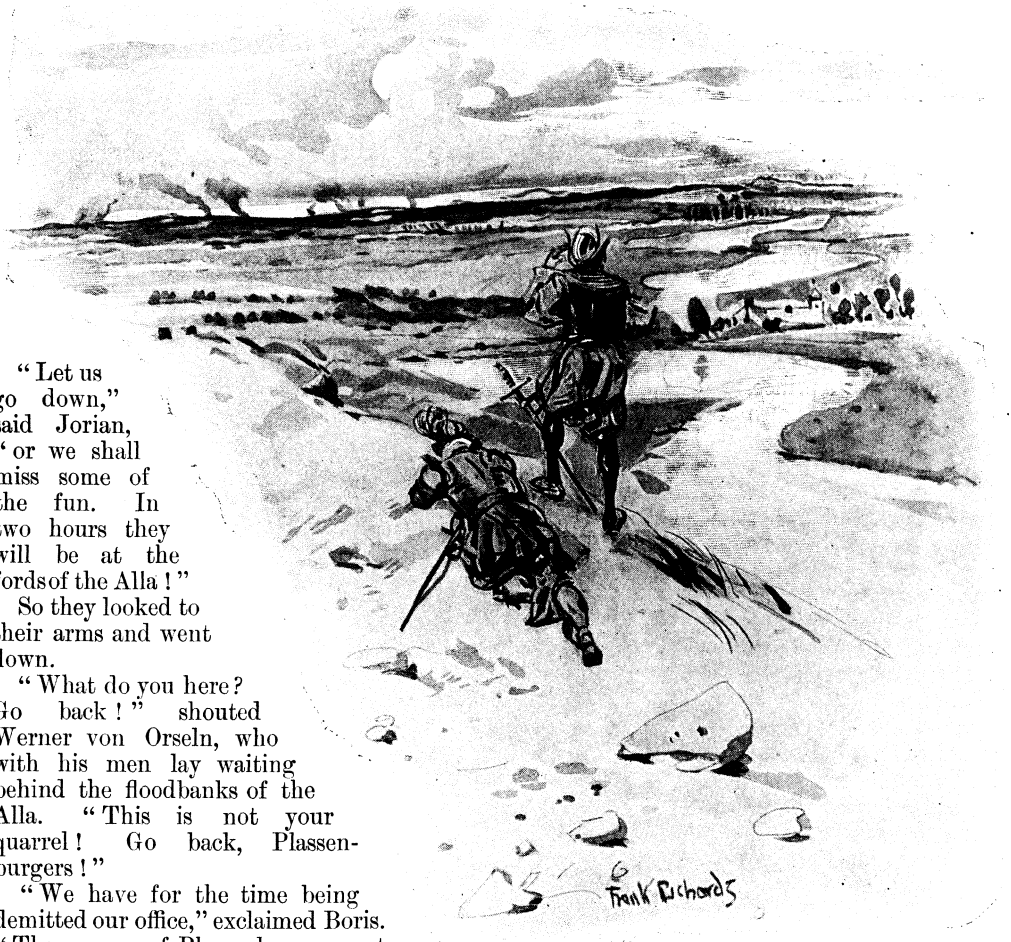
"I tell you what," he said at last, in a tone of intense interest, "these are no fires lighted by Courtlanders. The heavy Baltic knights could never ride so fast nor spread so far. The Muscovite is out! These are Cossack fires. Bravo, Jorian! we shall yet have our Hugo here with his axe! He will never suffer the Bear so near his borders."

ketoon, if it is all the same to you. It will be something to do till these firebrands come within arm's length of us.

"I have here two which are very much at your service, if you know how to use them!" said Werner.

The men-at-arms laughed.

"We know their tricks better than those of



"Boris looked long beneath his hand."

"Let us go down," said Jorian, "or we shall miss some of the fun. In two hours they will be at the fords of the Alla!"

So they looked to their arms and went down.

"What do you here? Go back!" shouted Werner von Orseln, who with his men lay waiting behind the floodbanks of the Alla. "This is not your quarrel! Go back, Plassenburgers!"

"We have for the time being demitted our office," exclaimed Boris. "The envoys of Plassenburg are at home in bed, sick of a most sanguinary fever. We offer you our swords as free fighting men and good Teuts. The Muscovites are over yonder. Lord, to think that I have lived to forty-eight and never yet killed even one bearded Russ!"

"You may mend that record shortly, to all appearance, if you have luck!" said Von Orseln grimly. "And this gentleman here," he added, looking at Jorian, "is he also in bed, sick?"

"My sword is at your service," said the round one, "though I should prefer a mus-

our sweethearts!" they said, "and those we know well!"

"Here they be, then," said Von Orseln. "I sent a couple of men spurring to warn my lady Joan, and I bade them leave their muskets and bandoliers till they came back, that they might ride the lighter to and from Kernsberg."

Boris and Jorian took the spare pieces with a glow of gratitude, which was, however, very considerably modified when they

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discovered the state in which their former owners had kept them.

"Dirty Wendish pigs," they said (which was their favourite malediction, though they themselves were Wends of the Wends). "Were they but an hour in our camp they should ride the wooden horse with these muskets tied to their soles to keep them firmly down. Faugh!"

And Jorian withdrew his finger from the muzzle, black as soot with the grease of uncleansed powder.

Looking up they saw that the priest with the little army of Kernsberg was praying fervently (after the Hussite manner, without book) for the safety of the State and person of their lady Duchess, and that the men were listening bareheaded beneath the green slope of the water-dyke.

"Go on cleaning," said Boris; "this is some heretic function, and might sap our morality. We are volunteers, anyway, as well as the best of good Catholics. We do not need unlicensed prayers. If you have quite done with that rag stick, lend it to me, Jorian!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

CAPTAINS BORIS AND JORIAN PROMOTE PEACE.

Now this is the report which Captains Boris and Jorian, envoys (very) extraordinary from the Prince and Princess of Plassenburg to the reigning Duchess of Hohenstein, made upon their return from the fords of the Alla to their home government.

They wrote it in collaboration, on the usual plan of one working and the other assisting him with advice.

Jorian, being of the rotund and complaisant faction, acquiesced in the proposal that he should do the writing. But as he never got beyond, "To our honoured Lord and Lady Hugo and Helene, these——" there needs not to be any particularity as to his manner of acting the scribe. He mended a pen till it looked like a brush worn to the straggling point. He squared his elbows and overset the inkhorn. He daubed an entire folio of paper with a completeness which left nothing to the imagination.

Then he remembered that he knew where a secretary was in waiting. He would go and borrow him. Jorian re-entered their bedroom with a beaming smile, and the secretary held by the sleeve to prevent his escape. Both felt that the report was as good as written. It began thus:—

"With great assiduity (a word suggested by the secretary) your envoys remembered your Highnesses' princely advice and command that we should involve ourselves in no warfare or other local disagreement. So when we heard that Hohenstein was to be invaded by the troops of the Prince of Courtland we were deeply grieved.

"Nevertheless, judging it to be for the good of our country that we should have a near view of the fighting, we left worthy and assured substitutes in our place and room——"

"The parchment commission with a string round his belly!" explained Jorian, in answer to the young secretary's lifted eyebrow; "there he is, hiding behind the faggot-chest."

"Get on, Boris," quoth Jorian, from the settee on which he had thrown himself; "it is your turn to lie."

"Good!" says Boris. And did it as followeth:—

"We left our arms behind us——"

"Such as we could not carry," added Jorian under his breath. The secretary, a wise youth—full of the new learning and of talk concerning certain books printed on paper and bound all with one *druck* of a great machine like a cheese-press—held his pen suspended over the paper in doubt what to write.

"Do not mind him," said Boris, "*I* am dictating this report."

"Yes, my lord!" replied the secretary from behind his hand.

"We left our arms and armour behind us, and went out to make observations in the interest of your Highnesses' armies. Going down through the woods we saw many wild swine, exceeding fierce. But having no means of hunting these, we evaded them, all save one, which misfortunately met its death by falling against a spear in the hands of Captain Boris, and another, also of the male sex, shot dead by Jorian's pistol, which went off by accident as it was passing."

"I have already written that your arms were left at home, according to your direction," said the secretary, who was accustomed to criticise the composition of diplomatic reports.

"Pshaw!" growled Boris, bending his brows upon such superfluity of virtue; "a little thing like that will never be noticed. Besides, a man must carry something. We had no cannon or battering rams with us,

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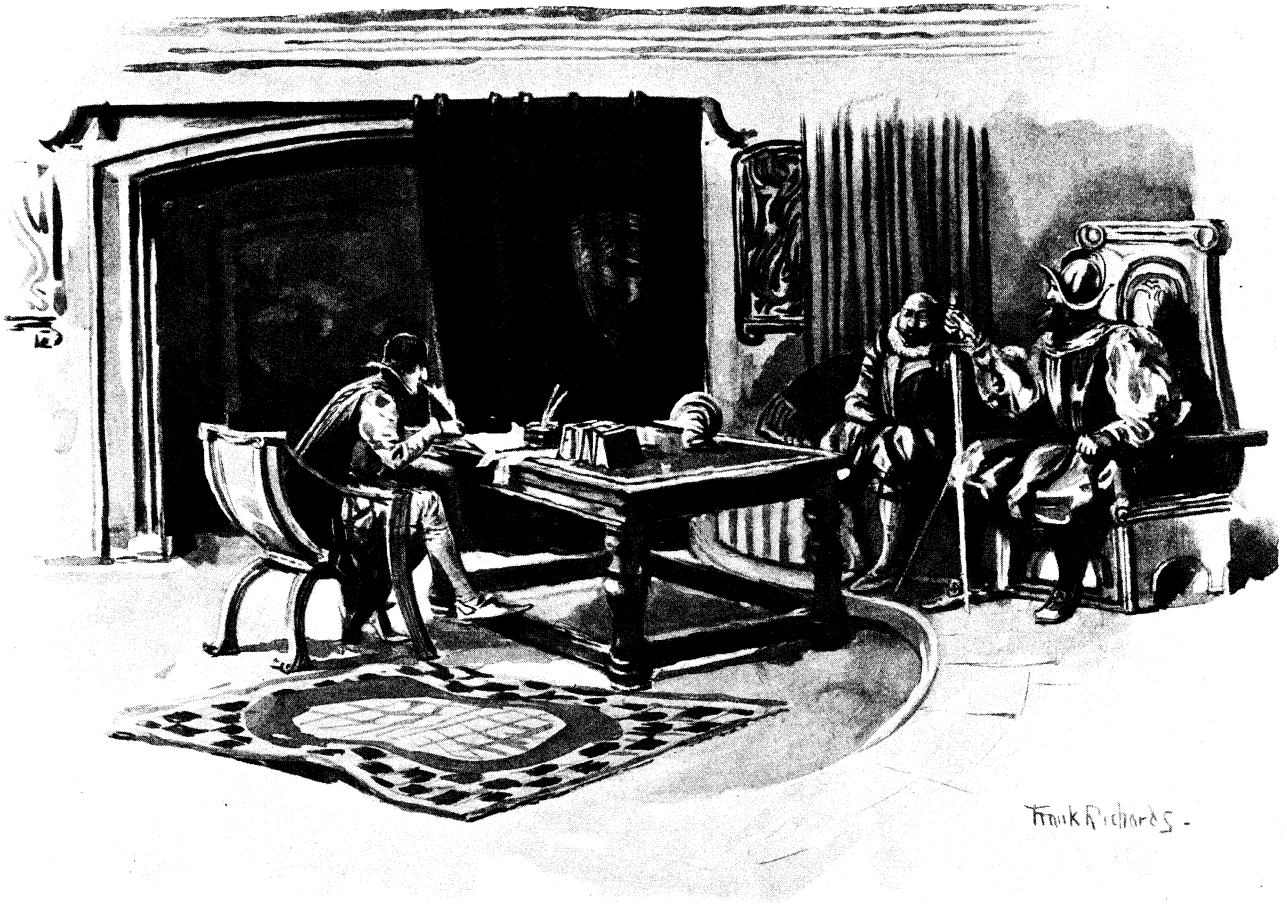

THE BORROWED SECRETARY WRITES AT THE BIDDING OF CAPTAINS BORIS AND JORIAN.

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therefore we were unarmed—to all intents and purposes, that is!"

The secretary sighed. Verily life (as Von Orseln averred) must be easy in Plassenburg, if such stories would pass with the Prince. And now it seemed as if they would.

"We found the soldiers of the Duchess Joan waiting at the fords of the Alla, which is the eastern border of their province. There were not many of them, but all good soldiers. The Courtlanders came on in myriads, with Muscovites without number. These last burned and slew all in their path. Now the men of Hohenstein are good to attack, but their fault is that they are not patient to defend. So it came to pass that not long after we arrived at the fords of the Alla, one Werner von Orseln, commander of the soldiers of the Duchess, ordered that his men should attack the Courtlanders in front. Whereupon they crossed the ford, when they should have stayed behind their shelter. It was bravely done, but had better have been left undone.

"Remembering, however, your orders and our duty, we advanced with him, hoping that by some means we might be able to promote peace.

"This we did. For (wonderful as it may appear) we convinced no fewer than ten Muscovites whom we found sacking a farm, and their companions, four sutlers of Courtland, that it was wrong to slay and ravish in a peaceful country. In the heat of the argument Captain Boris received a bullet through his shoulder which caused us for the time being to cease our appeal and fall back. The Muscovites, however, made no attempt to follow us. Our arguments had been sufficient to convince them of the wickedness of their action. We hope to receive your princely approval of this our action—peace being, in our opinion, the greatest blessing which any nation can enjoy. For without flattery we may say that if others had argued with equal persuasiveness, the end would have been happier.

"Then, being once more behind the flood-dykes of the Alla, Captain Jorian examined the hurt of Captain Boris which he had received in the peace negotiations with the Muscovites. It was but a flesh wound, happily, and was soon bound up. But the pain of it acted upon both your envoys as an additional incentive to put an end to the horrors of war.

"So when a company of the infantry of Courtland, with whom we had hitherto had no opportunity of wrestling persuasively, attacked the fords, wading as deep as mid-thigh, we took upon us to rebuke them for their forwardness. And accordingly they desisted, some retreating to the further shore, while others, finding the water pleasant, remained, and floated peacefully down with the current.

"This also, in some measure, made for peace, and we humbly hope for the approval of your Highnesses, when you have remarked our careful observance of all your instructions.

"If only we had had with us our several companies of the Regiment of Karl the Miller's Son to aid us in the discussion, more Cossacks and Strelits might have been convinced, and the final result have been different. Nevertheless, we did what we could, and were successful with many beyond our hopes.

"But the men of Hohenstein being so few, and those of Courtland with their allies so many, the river was overpassed both above and below the fords. Whereupon I pressed it upon Werner von Orseln that he should retreat to a place of greater hope and safety, being thus in danger on both flanks.

"For your envoys have a respect for Werner von Orseln, though we grieve to report that, being a man of war from his youth up, he does not display that desire for peace which your good counsels have so deeply implanted in our breasts, and which animates the hearts of Boris and Jorian, captains in the princely guard of Plassenburg."

"Put that in, till I have time to think what is to come next!" said Boris, waving his hand to the secretary. "We are doing pretty well, I think!" he added, turning to his companion with all the self-consciousness of an amateur in words.

"Let us now tell more about Von Orseln, and how he would in no wise listen to us!" suggested Jorian. "But let us not mix the mead too strong! Our Hugo is shrewd!"

"This Werner von Orseln (be it known to your high Graciousnesses) was the chief obstacle in the way of our making peace, except, perhaps, those Muscovites with whom we were unable to argue, having no opportunity. This Werner had fought all the day, and, though most recklessly exposing himself, was still unhurt. His armour was covered with blood and black with powder after the fashion of these wild hot-bloods. His face also was stained, and when he spoke it was in a hoarse whisper. The matter of his discourse to us was this:—

"'I can do no more. My people are dead, my powder spent. They are more numerous

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than the sea-sands. They are behind us and before, also outflanking us on either side.'

"Then we advised him to set his face to Hohenstein and with those who were left to him to retreat in that direction. We accompanied him, bearing in mind your royal commands, and eager to do all that in us lay to advance the interests of amity. The enemy fetched a compass to close us in on every side.

"Whereupon we argued with them again to the best of our ability. There ensued some slight noise and confusion, so that Captain Boris forgot his wound, and Captain Jorian admits that in haste he may have spoken uncivilly to several Bor-Russian gentry who thrust themselves in his way. And for this unseemly conduct he craves the pardon of their Highnesses Hugo and Helene, his beloved master and mistress. However, as no complaint has been received from the enemy's headquarters, no breach of friendly relations may be apprehended. Captain Boris is of opinion that the Muscovite boors did not understand Captain Jorian's Teuton language. At least they were not observed to resent his words.

"In this manner were the invaders of Hohenstein broken through, and the remnant of the soldiers of the Duchess Joan reached Kernsberg in safety—a result which, we flatter ourselves, was as much due to the zeal and persuasiveness of your envoys as to the skill and bravery of Werner von Orseln and the soldiers of the Duchess.

"And your humble servants will ever pray for the triumph of peace and concord, and also for an undisturbed reign to your Highnesses through countless years. In token whereof we append our signatures and seals.

"BORIS.
"JORIAN."

"Is not that last somewhat overstrained about peace and concord and so forth?" asked Jorian anxiously.

"Not a whit—not a whit!" cried Boris, who, having finished his composition, was wholly satisfied with himself, after the manner of the beginner in letters. "Our desire to promote peace needs to be put strongly, in order to carry persuasion to their Highnesses in Plassenburg. In fact, I am not sure that it has been put strongly enough!"

"I am troubled with some few doubts myself!" said Jorian, under his breath.

And as the secretary jerked the ink from his pen he smiled.

(*To be continued.*)

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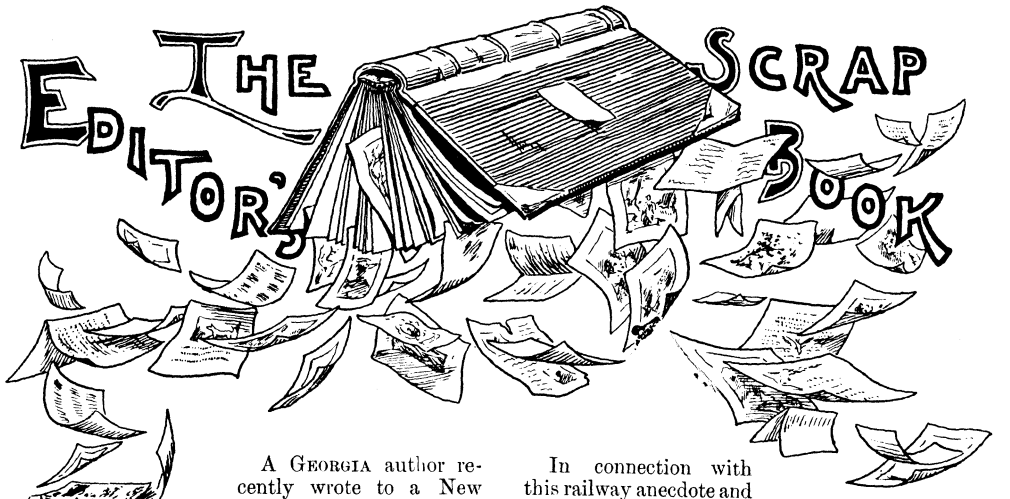

A GEORGIA author recently wrote to a New York publisher—

"What could you do with a story of say sixty-five thousand words?"

The publisher replied briefly—

"If the express company would undertake it, we could send it back to you immediately."

DOROTHY: He said that the world had been a desert to him till he met me.

IDA: That explains why he dances so like a camel, I suppose.

IN an interesting little book, entitled "All About Railways," the author recalls an amusing altercation which once took place between Mr. Frank Buckland and a booking-clerk. The naturalist had been in France, and was returning *via* Southampton with an overcoat stuffed with specimens of all sorts, dead and alive. Among them was a monkey, which was domiciled in a large breast-pocket. As Buckland was taking his ticket Jocko thrust up his head and attracted the attention of the booking-clerk, who immediately—and very properly—said, "You must have a ticket for that dog, if it's going with you."

"Dog?" said Buckland indignantly; "it's no dog; it's a monkey."

"It's a dog," replied the clerk.

"It's a monkey," retorted Buckland, and proceeded to show the whole animal, but without convincing the clerk, who insisted on five shillings for the dog ticket to London.

Naturally nettled at this, Buckland plunged his hand into another pocket and produced a tortoise, and laying it on the sill of the ticket window, said, "Perhaps you'll call *that* a dog, too?"

The clerk inspected the tortoise. "No," said he, "we make no charge for them—they're insects!"

In connection with this railway anecdote and with the article on railway tickets which appears in this number of the WINDSOR, it is interesting to note that, frequent as are the petty frauds perpetrated daily on our British railway systems—and most probably on those abroad also—the attempts to forge and manufacture spurious tickets are extremely rare and very seldom successful. There is, however, a story of a man who thought out a plan for travelling without the inconvenience of undergoing the customary preliminaries at the booking-office. He set up a complete printing plant and prepared bogus tickets available to and from different stations on the London and North-Western, Great Western, and Midland lines. But he overdid the mark. One day, on arriving at Derby, he presented a ticket from "Masboro' to Smethwick," the unusual appearance of which caused the collector to eye the traveller with some suspicion; closer examination proved it to be a forgery, and the fraudulent passenger was given into custody. On searching his house upwards of a thousand railway tickets were discovered in a drawer in his bedroom! The punishment he received was sufficiently severe to warn others who might conceive the idea of travelling in this cheap fashion.

THE PARROT: Now stop, George! George, if you kiss me again, I'll call mamma. Oh, George!

(*This may not appear funny to the reader, neither does it sound funny to* JOHN. JOHN *is engaged to* MARY. *He also knows that a* "GEORGE" *calls on* MARY *occasionally, "in a purely platonic sort of way, you know."*)

"Do you remember," said Miss Antiquitie to Colonel Crabtree, "how when you were a young man you proposed to me and I rejected you?"

"It is one of the happiest recollections of my life," said the Colonel, with an air of gallantry. And Miss Antiquitie is still wondering.

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REPORTER: You didn't get all the way to the Klondike?

TRAVELLER: No; I was lucky enough to starve almost to death before going over the Pass.

IF ignorance were really bliss there would be less misery in the world.

EDWIN (anxiously): So your father speaks very highly of me, does he?

ANGELINA: Yes; just to rile mother!

MINE HOST: Yes, there's lots of golf playin' here. Some of the folks 'ud rather play golf than eat.

VISITOR: Well, I'm not one of that kind. Just remember that I expect three square meals a day.

AN Irishman got out of a carriage at a railway station for refreshments, but unfortunately the bell rang, and the train left before he had finished his repast. "Hould on!" cried Pat, as he ran after the train like a madman. "Hould on, ye murderin' old stame-engine! Ye've got a passenger aboard that's left behind."

MORE ANGELICA!

By Dorothy Gurney.

THE sorrows and trials of the stage manager have never been sympathetically treated or understood. Far be it, though, from the present writer to think herself equal to the duty, but as the chronicler of the Angelicals—as a friend has happily nicknamed my nieces and their brother—I feel I must not shirk the task. Angelica's father and mother have a charming country house, "The Narrows," so called because the river at the bottom of the garden contracts into a mere meadow stream. Here the children have a playroom of their very own, which they have turned into a makeshift stage. A curtain is drawn across half the room, concealing the stage and an ancient harmonium on the o.p. side, the most important "property" the youthful company possesses. At frequent intervals the grown-ups are invited to an entertainment, and sit, or rather squeeze, into a couple of rows of chairs in the front of the theatre.

Jack is stage manager and "heavy lead" in one, and undergoes at the hands of his principal lady and leading juvenile, Agnes and Angelica, tortures which are painfully audible to the expectant audience. One tragedy remains especially imprinted on my mind. Notice has been given of a performance of "Masks and Faces" one summer afternoon, and the elders are awaiting the summons from the playroom, full of curiosity as to how the play will be cast. None comes; instead sobs, deep and loud, are heard issuing from the manager's little bedroom. The anxious mother flies upstairs and the door is unlocked to her by a small, woe-begone figure of a boy.

"What on earth's the matter, Jack? Are you hurt?"

"No," wails the luckless youth, "but it's — more — than (sob!) any stage manager can stand!"

"What is?" demands his puzzled parent.

"Why, Angelica was to play Peg Woff—Woff—mgton (sob!), and she's got on scarlet knickerbockers, and (a burst of grief) she won't wear petticoats."

My sister nobly suppresses her laughter and looks duly disgusted.

"I shall speak to Angelica," she says with stern dignity, and walks forthwith into the playroom. There stands Angel, beautiful, but contumacious, in a short black jacket and scarlet sash, a large black feathered hat cocked jauntily upon her golden curls, and a smart pair of scarlet satin knickers where petticoats should be.

"Angel," cries my sister severely, "what does all this mean?"

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Angelica sticks a small beruffled arm impudently akimbo and tosses her head.

"I was cast for Sir Charles Pomander," she says with indignant warmth, "and now they *will* have me play Peg; and all I say is, *if* I play Peg I play her in these knickers." Curtain.

That performance is a decided fiasco. Greater success attends the ring dialogue between Portia (Agnes) and Nerissa (Angelica), which is modestly announced as being "not quite essactly Shakespeare, you know, but just as good!" Portia, always a tender-hearted little creature, objects to Nerissa's naughty plans on the ground that "it might hurt our husbands' feelings."

"Feelings!" cries Nerissa with fine scorn; "let it hurt their feelings! I'm sure they hurt *our* feelings often enough; it'll do them good to have *their's* hurt for once in a way."

The dramatic intensity of this speech brings down the house.

We are occasionally treated to tableaux, and it is then that the harmonium plays a really important part in the proceeding. I can see Strafford (Angel), with his flaxen head on the block (an inverted coal-scuttle), awaiting death at the hands of the masked executioner (Jack), while a weeping lady (Agnes) applies a large pocket-handkerchief to her eyes with one hand, and with the other dexterously plays minor and untuneful chords upon the aged keys. What magnificent thunder, too, was ground out in the tableau of "Guy Fawkes," when the spying courtier (Agnes) peered out from behind the instrument, one leg curled round on the pedals, while the other jerked the dark window blind to and fro, letting in the brilliant summer sunshine in flashes for all the world like the finest stage lightning! That was a storm indeed! How weird, too, was the tune (*sic!*) that was played when Angelica, as the pied piper, in long brown stockings and tunic, lured some neighbours' children, the underlings of the company, to the wonderful mountain! One of these children, a very beautiful, fragile little creature, played the lame boy and brought tears to my eyes. Angelica's face was a study in expression. The soul, the inspired look of purpose, would have done credit to a larger stage than the playroom of the Narrows—for Angelica has her moments of depth and poetry. Coming home one evening from a Drury Lane pantomime, with her head tucked up against my arm, I thought her asleep, and murmured—

A REVERIE.

From the picture by Erdlett.

"Quite comfy, darling?"

"Oh, Kitty"—in accents of the liveliest reproach—"you spoilt my lovely world! I was dreaming awake, and there were fairies—real fairies, not pantomime ones—and lovely flowers and birds and rivers and things; and I'd just got there, and now you've spoilt it all!"

"I am dreadfully sorry, darling!"

"Never mind"—resignedly—"it was too good to last."

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JIMMY (reading): Then his father looked at him, more in sorrow than in anger——

TOMMY: Whew! I wish my guv'nor was built that way.

"IT is a solemn thing," said the young man, "when a woman trusts a man with her affections."

"It ain't as solemn," said the man with the plaid necktie, "as when she won't trust him with his own wages."

JOHNNIE: Mamma, what makes the plants so dead?

MAMMA: Dry weather and poor soil, I suppose, dear.

JOHNNIE: I guess those ants crawling over 'em tickled 'em to death.

LADY CUSTOMER (angrily): I believe there is water in your milk, sir.

HONEST MILKMAN: Yes, madam, there is. I have on several occasions urged the cows to be more careful, but they insist that, as they are strict teetotallers, it is impossible for them to dispense entirely with Nature's beverage.

"Do you think Johnny is contracting bad habits at school?" asked Mrs. Caution of her husband.

"No, dear, I don't; I think he is expanding them," was the reply.

A little schoolmistress named Beauchamp,
Said, "These dreadful boys! how shall I
teauchamp?
For they will not behave,
Although I look grave,
And with tears in my eyes I beseauchamp."

MAUD: "Do you know, I really believe that Tom is going to propose."

BERTHA: "I noticed that he was looking terribly sad about something or other; but then, you know, dear, it may not be that. Perhaps his mother is ill, or possibly he isn't feeling well himself."

JOHNSON: It makes me tired to hear Jones beginning a sentence with the words "To tell the truth." What does he want to say that for?

THOMPSON: When Jones is going to tell the truth, I think it is a case where it is highly proper that his hearers should be informed of the fact.

CROAHAM HURST, NEAR CROYDON.

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Cherry-Blossom.

By Beatrice Offor.

Hosted by Google

STALKY & CO.

BY RUDYARD KIPLING.*

Illustrated by L. RAVEN HILL.

No. VI.—THE LAST TERM.

IT was within a few days of the holidays, the term-end examinations, and, more important still, the issue of the College paper which Beetle edited. He had been cajoled into that office by the blandishments of Stalky and McTurk and the extreme rigour of study law. Once installed, he discovered, as others have done before him, that his duty was to do the work while his friends criticised. Stalky christened it the *Swillingford Patriot*, in pious memory of Sponge—and McTurk compared the output unfavourably with Ruskin and De Quincey. Only the Head took an interest in the publication, and his methods were peculiar. He gave Beetle the run of his brown-bound, tobacco-scented library; prohibiting nothing, recommending nothing. There Beetle found a fat armchair, a silver inkstand, and unlimited pens and paper. There were scores and scores of ancient dramatists; there were Hakluyt, his voyages; French translations of Muscovite authors called Pushkin and Lermontoff; little tales of a heady and bewildering nature, interspersed with unusual songs—Peacock was that writer's name; there was Borrow's "Lavengro"; an odd theme, purporting to be a translation of something, called a "Rubaiyat," which the Head said was a poem not yet come to its own; there were hundreds of volumes of verse—Crashaw; Dryden; Alexander Smith; L.E.L.; Lydia Sigourney; Fletcher's "Purple Island"; Donne; Marlowe's "Faust"; and —this made McTurk (to whom Beetle conveyed it) sheer drunk for three days—Ossian; "The Earthly Paradise"; "Atalanta in Calydon"; and Rossetti—to name only a few. Then the Head, drifting in under pretence of playing censor to the paper, would read here a verse and here another of these poets, opening up avenues. And, slow breathing, with half-shut eyes above his cigar, he would speak of great men living, and journals, long dead, founded in their riotous youth; of years when all the planets were little new-lit stars trying to find their places in the uncaring void, and he, the Head, knew them as young men know one another. So the regular work went to the dogs, Beetle being full of other matter and metres, hoarded in secret and only told to McTurk of an afternoon, on the sands, walking high and disposedly round the wreck of the Armada galleon, shouting and declaiming against the sea.

Thanks in large part to their housemaster's experienced distrust, the three for three consecutive terms had been passed over for promotion to the rank of prefect—an office that went by merit, and carried with it the honour of the ground-ash, and liberty, under restrictions, to use it.

"*But*," said Stalky, "come to think of it, we've done more giddy jesting with the Sixth since we've been passed over than anyone else in the last seven years."

He touched his neck proudly. It was encircled by the stiffest of stick-up collars, which custom decreed could be worn only by the Sixth. And the Sixth saw those collars and said no word. "Pussy," Abanazar, or Dick Four of a year ago would have seen them discarded in five minutes or . . . . But the Sixth of that term was made up mostly of young but brilliantly clever boys, pets of the house-masters, too anxious for their dignity to care to come to open odds with the resourceful three. So they crammed their caps at the extreme back of their heads, instead of a trifle over one eye as the Fifth should, rejoiced in patent-leather boots on week-days, and marvellous made-up ties on Sundays—no man rebuking. McTurk was going up for Cooper's Hill, and Stalky for Sandhurst, in the spring; and the Head had told them both that, unless they absolutely

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collapsed during the holidays, they were safe. As a trainer of colts, the Head seldom erred in an estimate of form.

He had taken Beetle aside that day and given him much good advice, not one word of which did Beetle remember when he dashed up to the study, white with excitement, and poured out the wondrous tale. It demanded a great belief.

"*You* begin on a hundred a year?" said McTurk unsympathetically. "Rot!"

"*And* my passage out! It's all settled. The Head says he's been breaking me in for this for ever so long, and I never knew—I never knew. One don't begin with writing straight off, y'know. 'Begin by filling in telegrams and cutting things out o' papers with scissors."

"Oh, Scissors! What an ungodly mess you'll make of it," said Stalky. "But, anyhow, this will be your last term, too. Seven years, my dearly beloved 'earers—though not prefects."

"Not half bad years, either," said McTurk. "I shall be sorry to leave the old Coll.; sha'n't you?"

They looked out over the sea creaming along the Pebble Ridge in the clear winter light. "Wonder where we shall all be this time next year?" said Stalky absently.

"This time five years," said McTurk.

"Oh," said Beetle, "my leavin's between ourselves. The Head hasn't told anyone. I know he hasn't, because Prout grunted at me to-day that if I were more reasonable—yah!—I might be a prefect next term. I suppose he's hard up for his prefects."

"Let's finish up with a row with the Sixth," suggested McTurk.

"Dirty little schoolboys!" said Stalky, who already saw himself a Sandhurst cadet. "What's the use?"

"Moral effect," quoth McTurk. "Leave an imperishable tradition, and all the rest of it."

"Better go into Bideford an' pay up our debts," said Stalky. "I've got three quid out of my father—*ad hoc*. 'Don't owe more than thirty bob, either. Cut along, Beetle, and ask the Head for leave. Say you want to correct the *Swillingford Patriot*."

"Well, I do," said Beetle. "It'll be my last issue, and I'd like it to look decent. I'll catch him before he goes to his lunch."

Ten minutes later they wheeled out in line, by grace released from five o'clock call-over, and all the afternoon lay before them. So also unluckily did King, who never passed without witticisms. But brigades of Kings could not have ruffled Beetle that day.

"Aha! Enjoying the study of light literature, my friends," said he, rubbing his hands. "Common mathematics are not for such soaring minds as yours, are they?"

("One hundred a year," thought Beetle, smiling into vacancy.)

"Our open incompetence takes refuge in the flowery paths of inaccurate fiction. But a day of reckoning approaches, Beetle mine. I myself have prepared a few trifling foolish questions in Latin prose which can hardly be evaded even by your practised acts of deception. Ye-es. Latin prose. I think, if I may say so—but we shall see when the papers are set—'Ulpian serves *your* need.' Aha! '*Elucescebat*, quoth our friend.' We shall see! We shall see!"

Still no sign from Beetle. He was on a steamer, his passage paid into the wide and wonderful world—a thousand leagues beyond Lundy Island.

King dropped him with a snarl.

"He doesn't know. He'll go on correctin' exercises an' gassin' an' showin' off before the little boys next term—and next." Beetle hurried after his companions up the steep path of the furze-clad hill behind the College.

They were throwing pebbles on the top of the gasometer, and the grimy gas-man in charge bade them desist. They watched him oil a turncock sunk in the ground between two furze-bushes.

"Cokey, what's that for?" said Stalky.

"To turn the gas on to the kitchens," said Cokey. "Ef so be I didn't turn her on, yeou young gen'lemen 'ud be larnin' your book by candlelight."

"Um!" said Stalky, and was silent for at least a minute.

"Hullo! Where are you chaps going?"

A bend of the lane brought them face to face with Tulke, senior prefect of King's house—a smallish, white-haired boy, of the type that must be promoted on account of its intellect, and ever afterwards appeals to the Head to support its authority when zeal has outrun discretion.

The three took no sort of notice. They were on lawful pass. Tulke repeated his question hotly, for he had suffered many slights from Number Five study, and most mistakenly fancied that he had at last caught them tripping.

"What the devil is that to you?" Stalky replied with his sweetest smile.

"Look here, I'm not goin'—I'm not goin' to be sworn at by the Fifth!" sputtered Tulke.

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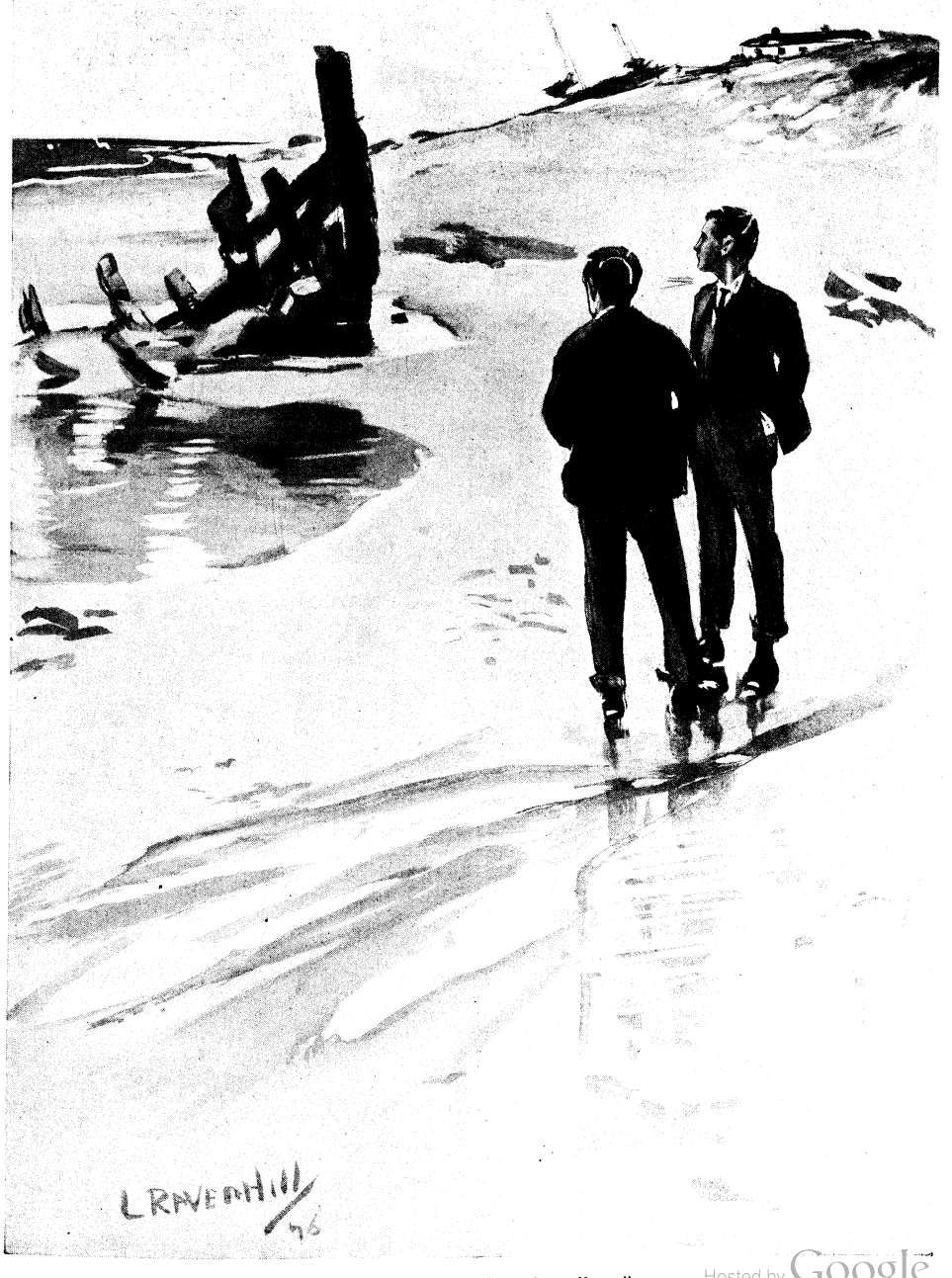

"The wreck of the Armada galleon."

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"Then cut along and call a prefects' meeting," said McTurk, knowing Tulke's weakness.

The prefect became inarticulate with rage.

"Mustn't yell at the Fifth that way," said Stalky. "It's vile bad form."

"Cough it up, ducky!" McTurk said soothingly.

"I—I want to know what you chaps are doing out of bounds?" This with an important flourish of his cane.

"Ah," said Stalky. "Now we're gettin' at it. Why didn't you ask that before?"

"Well, I ask it now. What are you doing?"

"We're admiring you, Tulke," said Stalky. "We think you're no end of a fine chap, don't we?"

"We do! We do!" A dogcart with some girls in it swept round the corner, and Stalky promptly kneeled before Tulke in the attitude of prayer; so Tulke turned a colour.

"I've reason to believe——" he began.

"Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!" shouted Beetle, after the manner of Bideford's town crier. "Tulke has reason to believe! Three cheers for Tulke!"

They were given. "It's all our giddy admiration," said Stalky. "You know how we love you, Tulke. We love you so much we think you ought to go home and die. You're too good to live, Tulke."

"Yes," said McTurk. "*Do* oblige us by dyin'. Think how lovely you'd look stuffed!"

Tulke swept up the road with an unpleasant glare in his eye.

"That means a prefects' meeting—sure pop," said Stalky. "Honour of the Sixth involved, and all the rest of it. Tulke'll write notes all this afternoon, and Carson will call us up after tea. They daren't overlook that."

"Bet you a bob he follows us!" said Stalky. "He's King's pet, and it's scalps to both of 'em if we're caught out. We must be virtuous."

"Then I move we go to Mother Yeo's for a last gorge. We owe her about ten bob, and Mary'll weep sore when she knows we're leaving," said Beetle.

"She gave me an awful wipe on the head last time—Mary," said Stalky.

"She does if you don't duck," said McTurk. "But she generally kisses one back. Let's try Mother Yeo."

They sought a little bottle-windowed, half-dairy, half-restaurant, a dark-browed, two-hundred-year-old house, at the head of a narrow side street. They had patronised it from the days of their fagdom, and were very much friends at home.

"We've come to pay our debts, mother," said Stalky, sliding his arm round the fifty-six inch waist of the mistress of the establishment. "To pay our debts and say good-bye—and—and we're awf'ly hungry."

"Aie!" said Mother Yeo, "makin' love to me! I'm shaamed of 'ee."

"Reckon us wouldn't du no such thing if Mary was here," said McTurk, lapsing into the broad North Devon that the boys rejoiced in on their campaigns.

"Who'm takin' my name in vain?" The inner door opened, and Mary, fair-haired, blue-eyed, and apple-cheeked, entered with a bowl of cream in her hands. McTurk kissed her. Beetle followed suit, with exemplary calm. Both boys were promptly cuffed.

"Niver kiss the maid when 'e can kiss the mistress," said Stalky, shamelessly winking at Mother Yeo, as he investigated a shelf of jams.

"Glad to see *one* of 'e don't want his head slapped no more?" said Mary invitingly, in that direction.

"Neu! 'Reckon I can get 'em give me," said Stalky, his back turned.

"Not by me—yeou little masterpiece!"

"Niver asked 'ee. There's maids to Northam. Yiss—an' Appledore." An unreproducable sniff, half contempt, half reminiscence, rounded the retort.

"Aie! Yeou won't niver come to no good end. Whutt be 'baout, smellin' the cream?"

"'Tees bad," said Stalky. "Zmell 'un."

Incautiously Mary did as she was bid.

"Bidevoor kiss."

"Niver amiss," said Stalky, taking it without injury.

"Yeou — yeou — yeou —" Mary began, bubbling with mirth.

"They'm better to Northam—more rich, laike—an' us gets them give back again," he said, while McTurk solemnly waltzed Mother Yeo out of breath, and Beetle told Mary the sad news, as they sat down to clotted cream, jam and hot bread.

"Yiss. Yeou'll niver zee us no more, Mary. We'm goin' to be passons an' missioners."

"Steady on!" said McTurk, looking through the blind. "Tulke *has* followed us. He's comin' up the street now."

"They've niver put us out o' bounds," said Mother Yeo. "Bide yeou still, my

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little dearrs." She rolled into the inner room to make the score.

"Mary," said Stalky, suddenly, with tragic intensity. "Do 'ee lov' me, Mary?"

"Iss—fai! Talled 'ee zo since yeou was zo high!" the damsel replied.

"Zee un comin' up street, then?" Stalky pointed to the unconscious Tulke. "He've niver been kissed by no sort or manner o' maid in hees borned laife, Mary. Oh, 'tees shaamful!"

"Whutt's to do with me? 'Twill come to 'un in the way o' nature, I reckon." She nodded her head sagaciously. "You niver want me to kiss un—sure-*ly*?"

"'Give 'ee half-a-crown if 'ee will," said Stalky, exhibiting the coin.

Half-a-crown was much to Mary Yeo, and a jest was more; but——

"Yeu'm afraid," said McTurk, at the psychological moment.

"Aie!" Beetle echoed, knowing her weak point. "There's not a maid in Northam 'ud think twice. An' yeou such a fine maid, tu!"

McTurk planted one foot firmly against the inner door lest Mother Yeo should return inopportunely, for Mary's face was set. It was then that Tulke found his way blocked by a tall daughter of Devon—that county of easy kisses, the pleasantest under the sun. He dodged aside politely. She reflected a moment and laid a vast hand upon his shoulder.

"Where be 'ee gwaine tu, my dearr?" said she.

Over the handkerchief Stalky had crammed into his mouth he could see the boy turn scarlet.

"Gie I a kiss! Don't they larn 'ee manners to College?"

Tulke gasped and wheeled. Solemnly and conscientiously Mary kissed him twice, and the luckless prefect fled.

"Mary entered with a bowl of cream in her hands."

She stepped into the shop, her eyes full of simple wonder.

"Kissed un?" said Stalky, handing over the money.

"Iss, fai! But, oh, my little body, *he*'m no Colleger. 'Zeemed tu-minded to cry, laike."

"Well, we won't. You couldn't make us cry that way," said McTurk. "Try."

Whereupon Mary cuffed them all round.

As they went out with tingling ears, said Stalky generally, "Don't think there'll be much of a prefects' meeting."

"Won't there, just?" said Beetle. "Look here. If he kissed her—which is our tack—he is a cynical monster of depravity, and his conduct is blatant impropriety. *Confer orationes Regis furiosissimi*, when he collared me readin' 'Don Juan.'"

"'Course he kissed her," said McTurk. "In the middle of the street. With his house-capon!"

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"The luckless prefect fled."

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"Time, 3.57 p.m. Make a note o' that. What d'you mean, Beetle?" said Stalky.

"Well! He's a truthful little beast. He may say he was kissed."

"And then?"

"Why, then!" Beetle capered at the mere thought of it. "Don't you see? The corollary to the giddy proposition is that the Sixth can't protect 'emselves from being kissed. 'Want nursemaids to look after 'em! We've only got to whisper that to the school. Jam for the Sixth! Jam for us! Either way it's jammy!"

"By Gum!" said Stalky. "Our last term's endin' well. Now you cut along an' finish up your old rag, and Turkey and me will help. We'll go in the back way. No need to bother Randall."

"Don't play the giddy garden-goat, then?" Beetle knew what help meant, though he was by no means averse to showing his importance before his allies. The little loft behind Randall's printing-office was his own territory, where he saw himself already controlling the *Times*. Here, under the guidance of the inky apprentice, he had learned to find his way more or less circuitously about the case, and considered himself an expert compositor.

The school paper in its locked formes lay on a stone-topped table, a proof by the side; but not for worlds would Beetle have corrected from the mere proof. Armed with a mallet and a pair of tweezers, he knocked out mysterious wedges of wood that released the forme, picked out a letter here and inserted a letter there, reading as he went along and stopping much to chuckle over his own contributions.

"You won't show off like that," said McTurk, "when you've got to do it for your living. Upside down and backwards, isn't it? Let's see if I can read it."

"Get out!" said Beetle. "Go and read those formes in the rack there, if you think you know so much."

"Formes in a rack! What's that? Don't be so beastly professional."

McTurk drew off with Stalky to prowl about the office. They left little unturned.

"Come here a shake, Beetle. What's this thing?" said Stalky, in a few minutes. "Looks familiar."

Said Beetle, after a glance: "It's King's Latin prose exam. paper. *In—In Verrem: actio prima.* What a lark!"

"Think o' the pure-souled, high-minded boys who'd give their eyes for a squint at this!" said McTurk.

"No, Willie dear," said Stalky; "that would be wrong and painful to our kind teachers. You wouldn't crib, Willie, would you?"

"Can't read the beastly stuff, anyhow," was the reply. "Besides, we're leavin' at the end o' the term, so it makes no difference to us."

"'Member what the considerate Bloomer did to Spraggon's account of the Puffin'ton-Hounds? We must sugar Mr. King's milk for him," said Stalky, all lighted from within by a devilish joy. "Let's see what Beetle can do with those forceps he's so proud of."

"Don't see that you *can* make Latin prose much more cock-eyed than it is, but we'll try," said Beetle, transposing an *aliud* and *Asiæ* from two sentences. "Let's see! We'll put that full-stop a little bit further on, and begin the sentence with the next capital. Hurrah! Here's three lines that can move up all in a lump."

"'One of those scientific rests for which this eminent huntsman is so greatly celebrated.'" Stalky knew the Puffington run by heart.

"Hold on! Here's a *vol—voluntate quidnam* all by itself," said McTurk.

"I'll attend to her in a shake. *Quidnam* goes after Dolabella."

"Good old Dolabella," murmured Stalky. "Don't break him. Vile prose Cicero wrote, didn't he? He ought to be grateful for——"

"Hullo!" said McTurk, over another forme. "What price a giddy ode? *Qui—quis*—oh, it's *Quis multa gracilis*, o' course."

"Bring it along. We've sugared the milk here," said Stalky, after a few minutes zealous toil. "Never thrash your hounds unnecessarily."

"*Quis munditiis?* I swear that's not bad," began Beetle, plying the tweezers. "Don't that interrogation look pretty? *Heu quoties fidem.* That sounds as if the chap were anxious an' excited. *Cui flavam religas in rosa*—Whose flavour is relegated to a rose. *Mutatosque Deos flebit in antro.*"

"Mute gods weepin' in a cave," suggested Stalky. "'Pon my Sam, Horace needs as much lookin' after as—Tulke."

They edited him faithfully till it was too dark to see.

* * * * *

"Aha! *Elucescebat*, quoth our friend. Ulpian serves my need, does it? If King can make anything out of *that*, I'm a blue-eyed squatteroo," said Beetle, as they slid

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out of the loft window into a back alley of old acquaintance and started on a three-mile trot to the College. But the revision of the classics had detained them too long. They halted, blown and breathless, in the furze at the back of the gasometer, the College lights twinkling below, ten minutes at least late for tea and lock-up.

"It's no good," puffed McTurk. "Bet a bob the sergeant is waiting for defaulters under the lamp by the fives-court. It's a nuisance, too, because the Head gave us long leave, and one doesn't like to break it."

"'Let me now from the bonded ware'ouse of my knowledge——'" began Stalky.

"Oh, rot! Don't Jorrock. Can we make a run for it?" snapped McTurk.

"'Bishops' boots Mr. Radcliffe also condemned, an' spoke 'ighly in favour of tops cleaned with champagne an' abricot jam.' Where's that thing Cokey was twiddlin' this afternoon?"

They heard him groping in the wet, and presently beheld a great miracle. The lights of the Coastguard cottages near the sea went out; the brilliantly illuminated windows of the golf-club disappeared, and were followed by the frontage of the two hotels. Scattered villas dulled, twinkled, and vanished. Last of all, the College lights died also. They were left in the pitchy darkness of a windy winter's night.

"'Blister my kidneys. It *is* a frost. The dahlias are dead!'" said Stalky. "Bunk!"

They squattered through the dripping gorse as the College hummed like an angry hive and the dining-rooms chorused, "Gas! gas! gas!" till they came to the edge of the sunk path that divided them from their study. Dropping that, ha-ha- like bullets, and rebounding like boys, they dashed to their study and in less than two minutes had changed into dry trousers and coat, and, ostentatiously slippered, joined the mob in the dining-hall, which resembled the storm centre of a South American revolution.

"'Hellish dark and smells of cheese.'" Stalky elbowed his way into the press, howling lustily for gas. "Cokey must have gone for a walk. Sergeant'll have to find him."

Prout, as the nearest house-master, was trying to restore order, for rude boys were flicking butter-pats across chaos, and McTurk had turned on the fag's tea-urn, so that many were parboiled and wept with an unfeigned dolour. The Fourth and Upper Third broke into the school song, the "*Vive la Compagnie*," to the accompaniment of drumming knife-handles; and the junior forms shrilled bat-like shrieks and raided one another's victuals. Two hundred and fifty boys in high condition, seeking for more light, are truly earnest inquirers.

When a most vile smell of gas told them supplies had been renewed, Stalky, with waistcoat unbuttoned, sat gorgedly over what might have been his fourth cup of tea. "And that's all right," he said. "Hullo! 'Ere's Pomponius Ego!"

It was Carson, the head of the school, a simple, straight-minded soul, and a pillar of the First Fifteen, who crossed over from the prefects' table and in a husky, official voice invited the three to attend in his study in half an hour.

"Prefects' meetin'! Prefects' meetin'!" hissed the tables, and they imitated barbarically the actions and effects of the ground-ash.

"How are we goin' to jest with 'em?" said Stalky, turning half-face to Beetle. "It's your play!"

"Look here," was the answer, "all I want you to do is not to laugh. I'm goin' to take charge o' young Tulke's morals—*à la* King, and it's goin' to be serious. If you can't help laughin' don't look at me, or I'll go pop."

"I see. All right," said Stalky.

McTurk's lank frame stiffened in every muscle and his eyelids dropped half over his eyes. That last was a war-signal.

The eight or nine seniors, their faces very set and sober, were ranged in chairs round Carson's severely Philistine study. Tulke was not popular among them, and a few who had had experience of Stalky and Company doubted that he might perhaps have made an ass of himself. But the dignity of the Sixth was to be upheld. So Carson began hurriedly—

"Look here, you chaps, I've—we've sent for you to tell you you're a good deal too cheeky to the Sixth—have been for some time—and—and we've stood about as much as we're goin' to, and it seems you've been cursin' and swearin' at Tulke on the Bideford road this afternoon, and we're goin' to show you you can't do it. That's all."

"Well, that's awfully good of you," said Stalky, "but we happen to have a few rights of our own, too. You can't, just because you happen to be made prefects, haul seniors up and jaw 'em on spec., like a house-master. We aren't fags, Carson. This kind of thing may do for Davies Tertius, but it won't do for us."

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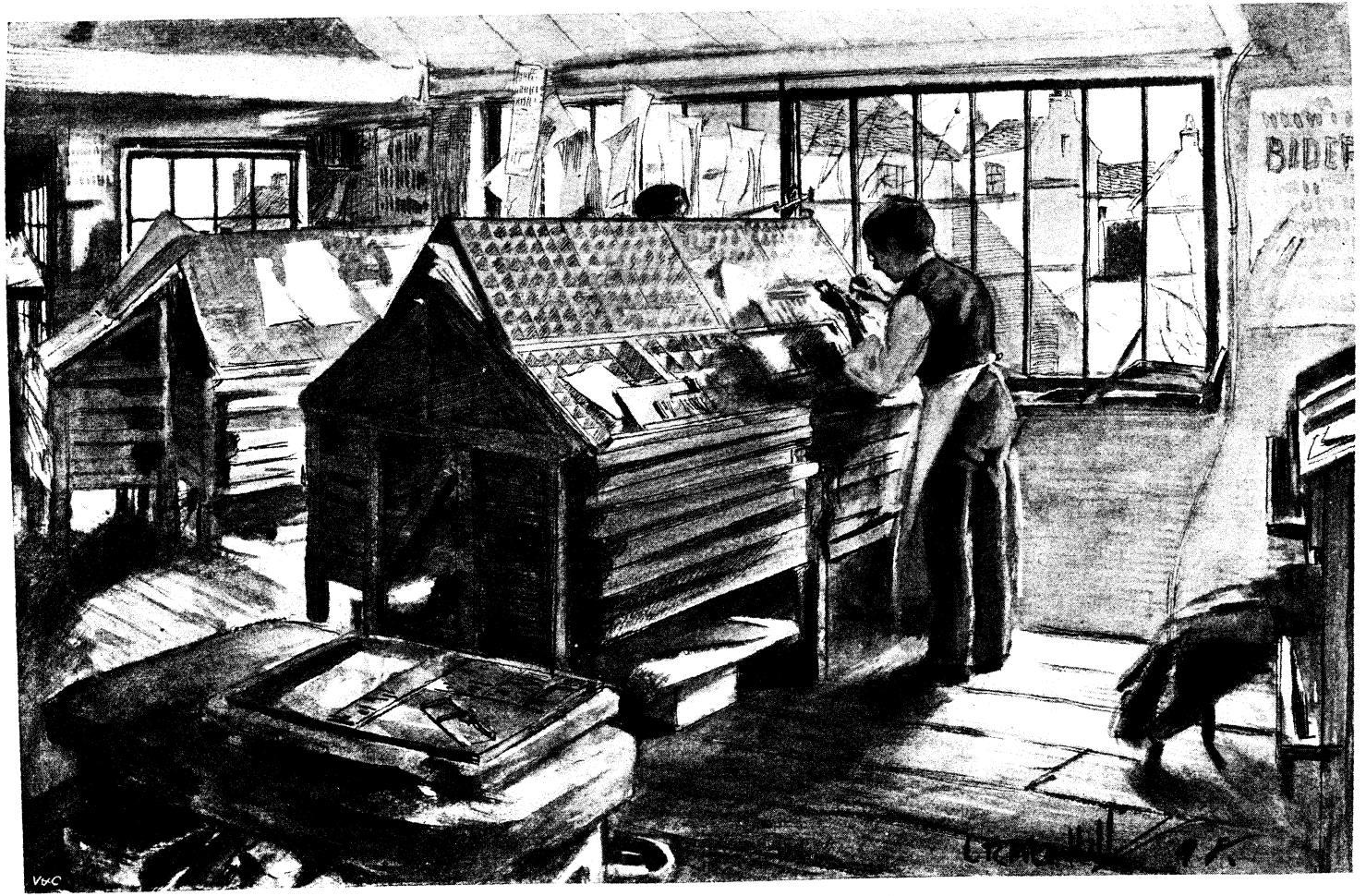

"He saw himself already controlling the *Times*."

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"It's only old Proud's lunacy that we weren't prefects long ago. You know that," said McTurk. "You haven't any tact."

"Hold on," said Beetle. "A prefects' meetin' has to be reported to the Head. I want to know if the Head backs Tulke in this business?"

"Well—well, it isn't exactly a prefects' meeting," said Carson. "We only called you in to warn you."

"But all the prefects are here," Beetle insisted. "Where's the difference?"

"My Gum!" said Stalky. "Do you mean to say you've just called us in for a jaw—after comin' to us before the whole school at tea an' givin' 'em the impression it was a prefects' meeting? 'Pon my Sam, Carson, you'll get into trouble, you will."

"Hole-an'-corner business—hole-an'-corner business," said McTurk, wagging his head. "Beastly suspicious."

The Sixth looked at each other uneasily. Tulke had called three prefects' meetings in two terms, till the Head had informed the Sixth that they were expected to maintain discipline without the recurrent menace of his authority. Now, it seemed that they had made a blunder at the outset, but any right-minded boy would have sunk the legality and been properly impressed by the Court. Beetle's protest was distinct "cheek."

"Well, you chaps deserve a lickin'," cried one Naughten incautiously. Then was Beetle filled with a noble inspiration.

"For interferin' with Tulke's love affairs, eh?" Tulke turned a rich sloe colour. "Oh, no, you don't!" Beetle went on. "You've had your innings. We've been sent up for cursing and swearing at you, and we're goin' to be let off with a warning! *Are* we? Now then, you're going to catch it."

"I—I—I," Tulke began. "Don't let that young devil start jawing."

"If you've anything to say you must say it decently," said Carson.

"Decently? I will. Now look here. When we went into Bideford we met this ornament of the Sixth—is that decent enough?—hanging about on the road with a nasty look in his eye. We didn't know *then* why he was so anxious to stop us, *but* at five minutes to four, when we were in Yeo's shop, we saw Tulke *in* broad daylight, *with* his house-cap on, kissin' and huggin' a woman *in* the public street. Is that decent enough for you?"

"I didn't—I wasn't."

"We saw you!" said Beetle. "And now—I'll be decent, Carson—you sneak back with her kisses (not for nothing had Beetle perused the later poets) hot on your lips and call prefects' meetings, which aren't prefects' meetings, to uphold the honour of the Sixth." A new and heaven-cleft path opened before him that instant. "And how do we know," he shouted, "how do we know how many of the Sixth are mixed up in this abominable affair?"

"Yes, that's what we want to know," said McTurk, with simple dignity.

"We meant to come to you about it quietly, Carson, but you *would* have the meeting," said Stalky sympathetically.

The Sixth were too taken aback to reply. So, carefully modelling his rhetoric on King, Beetle followed up the attack, surpassing and surprising himself.

"It—it isn't so much the cynical impropriety of the biznai, as the blatant depravity of it, that's so awful. As far as we can see, it's impossible for us to go into Bideford without runnin' up against some prefect's vulgar love affairs. There's nothing to snigger over, Naughten. *I* don't pretend to know much about these things—but it seems to me a chap must be pretty far dead in sin (that was a quotation from the School Chaplain) when he takes to embracing his lady friends before all the city (a reminiscence of Milton). He might at least have the decency—you're authorities on decency, I believe—to wait till the street was empty. But he didn't. You didn't! Oh, Tulke. You—you amorous little animal!"

"Here, shut up a minute. What's all this about, Tulke?" said Carson.

"I—look here. I'm awfully sorry. I never thought Beetle would take this line."

"Because—you've—no decency—you—thought—I hadn't," cried Beetle all in one breath.

"Tried to cover it all up with a conspiracy, did you?" said Stalky.

"Direct insult to all three of us," said McTurk. "A most evil mind you have, Tulke."

"I'll shove you fellows outside the door if you go on like this," said Carson angrily.

"That proves it's a conspiracy," said Stalky, with the air of a virgin martyr.

"I—I was goin' along the street—I swear I was," cried Tulke, "and—and I'm awfully sorry about it—a woman came up and kissed me. I swear I didn't kiss her."

There was a pause, filled by Stalky's long, liquid whistle of contempt, amazement, and decision.

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"They heard him groping in the wet."

"On my honour," gulped the persecuted one. "Oh, do stop him jawing."

"Very good," McTurk interjected. "We are compelled, of course, to accept your statement."

"Confound it!" roared Naughten. "You aren't head prefect here, McTurk."

"Oh, well," returned the Irishman, "you know Tulke better than we do. I am only speaking for ourselves. *We* accept Tulke's word. But all I can say is that if *I*'d been collared in a similarly disgustin' situation, and had offered the same explanation Tulke has, I—I wonder what you'd have said. However, it seems, on Tulke's word of honour——"

"And Tulkus—beg pardon—*kiss*, of course—Tul*kiss* is an honourable man," put in Stalky.

"——that the Sixth can't protect 'emselves from bein' kissed when they go for a walk!" cried Beetle, taking up the running with a rush. "Sweet business, isn't it? Cheerful thing to tell the fags, ain't it? We aren't prefects, of course, but we aren't kissed very much. Don't think that sort of thing ever enters our heads: does it, Stalky?"

"Oh, no!" said Stalky, turning aside to

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hide his emotions. McTurk's face merely expressed lofty contempt and a little weariness.

"Well, you seem to know a lot about it," interposed a prefect.

"Can't help it—when you chaps thrust it under our noses." Beetle dropped into a drawling parody of King's most biting colloquial style—the gentle rain after the thunderstorm. "Well, it's all very sufficiently vile and disgraceful, isn't it? I don't know who comes out of it worst. Tulke, who happens to have been caught; or the other fellows, who haven't. And we—" here he wheeled fiercely on the other two—"we've got to stand up and be jawed by them because we've disturbed their fun."

"Hang it! I only wanted to give you a word of warning," said Carson, thereby handing himself bound to the enemy.

"Warn? You?" This with the air of one who finds loathsome gifts in his locker. "Carson, *would* you be good enough to tell us what conceivable thing there is that you are entitled to warn us about after this exposure? Warn! Oh, it's a little *too* much. Let's get somewhere where there's fresh air!"

The door banged behind their outraged innocence.

"Oh, Beetle! Beetle! Beetle! Golden Beetle!" sobbed Stalky, hurling himself on Beetle's panting bosom as soon as they reached the study. "However did you do it?"

"Dear-r man!" said McTurk, embracing Beetle's head with both arms, while he swayed it to and fro on the neck, in time to this ancient burden—

"Pretty lips—sweeter than—cherry or plum!
Always look—jolly and—never look glum!
Seem to say—Come away. Kissy!—come, come!
Yummy-yum! Yummy-yum! Yummy-yum! Yum!"

"Look out. You'll smash my gig-lamps," puffed Beetle, emerging. "Wasn't it glorious? Didn't I 'Eric' 'em splendidly. Did you spot my cribs from King? Oh, blow!" His countenance clouded. "There's one adjective I didn't use—obscene. Don't know how I forgot that. It's one of King's pet ones, too."

"Never mind. They'll be sendin' ambassadors round in half a shake to beg us not to tell the school. It's a deuced serious business for them," said McTurk. "Poor Sixth—poor old Sixth!"

"Degraded young rips," Stalky snorted. "What an example to pure-souled boys like you and me!"

And the Sixth in Carson's study sat aghast, glowering at Tulke, who was on the edge of tears.

"Well," said the head prefect acidly, "you've made a pretty average ghastly mess of it, Tulke."

"Why—why didn't you lick that young devil Beetle before he began jawing?" wailed Tulke.

"I knew there'd be a row," said a prefect of Prout's house. "But you would insist on the meeting, Tulke."

"Yes, and a fat lot of good it's done us," said Naughten. "They come in here and jaw our heads off when we ought to be jawin' them. Beetle talks to us as if we were a lot of blackguards and—and all that. And when they've hung us up to dry, they go out and slam the door like a house-master. All your fault, Tulke."

"But I didn't kiss her."

"You ass! If you'd said you *had* and stuck to it, it would have been ten times better than what you did," Naughten retorted. "Now they'll tell the whole school—and Beetle'll make up a lot of beastly rhymes and nick-names."

"But hang it. She kissed me!" Outside of his work, Tulke's mind moved slowly.

"I'm not thinking of you. I'm thinking of *us*. I'll go up to their study and see if I can make 'em keep quiet!"

"Tulke's awf'ly cut up about this business," Naughten began ingratiatingly, when he found Beetle.

"Who's kissed him this time?"

"——and I've come to ask you chaps, and especially you, Beetle, not to let the thing be known all over the school. Of course, fellows as senior as you are can easily see why."

"Um!" said Beetle, with the cold reluctance of one who foresees an unpleasant public duty. "I suppose I must go and talk to the Sixth again."

"Not the least need, my dear chap, I assure you," said Naughten hastily. "I'll take any message you care to send."

But the chance of supplying the missing adjective was too tempting. So Naughten returned to that still undissolved meeting, Beetle, white, icy, and aloof, at his heels.

"There seems," he began, with laboriously crisp articulation, "there seems to be a certain amount of uneasiness among you as to the steps we may think fit to take in regard to this last revelation of the—ah—obscene. If it is any consolation to you to know that we have decided—for the honour of the school, you understand—to keep our

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mouths shut as to these—ah—obscenities, you—ah—have it."

He wheeled, his head among the stars, and strode statelily back to his study, where Stalky and McTurk lay side by side upon the table wiping their tearful eyes—too weak to move.

* * * * *

The Latin prose-paper was a success beyond their wildest dreams. Stalky and McTurk were, of course, out of all examinations (they did extra-tuition with the Head), but Beetle attended.

"This, I presume, is a par-ergon on your part," said King, as he dealt out the papers. "One final exhibition ere you are translated to loftier spheres? A last attack on the classics? It seems to confound you already."

Beetle studied the print with knit brows. "*I* can't make head or tail of it," he murmured. "What does it mean?"

"No, no!" said King, with scholastic coquetry. "We depend upon *you* to give us the meaning. This is an examination, Beetle mine, not a guessing competition. You will find your associates have no difficulty in——"

Tulke left his place and laid the paper on the desk. King looked, read, and turned a ghastly green.

"Stalky's missing a heap," thought Beetle. "Wonder how he'll get out of it."

"There seems," King began with a gulp, "a certain modicum of truth in our Beetle's remark. I am—er—inclined to believe that the worthy Randall must have dropped this in forme—if you know what that means. Beetle, you purport to be an editor. Perhaps you can enlighten the form as to formes?"

"What, sir? Whose form? I don't see that there's any verb in this sentence at all, an'—an'—the Ode is all different, somehow."

"I was about to say, before you volunteered your criticism, that an accident must have befallen the paper in type, and that the printer reset it by the light of Nature. No—" he held the thing at arm's length—"our Randall is not an authority on Cicero or Horace."

"Rather mean to shove it off on Randall," whispered Beetle to his neighbour. "King must ha' been as screwed as an owl when he wrote it out."

"But we can amend the error by dictating it."

"No, sir." The answer came pat from a dozen throats at once. "That cuts the time for the exam. Only two hours allowed, sir. 'Tisn't fair. It's a printed-paper exam. How're we goin' to be marked for it? It's all Randall's fault. It isn't *our* fault anyhow. An exam.'s an exam.," etc., etc.

Naturally Mr. King considered this was an attempt to undermine his authority, and, instead of beginning dictation at once, delivered a lecture on the spirit in which examinations should be approached. As the storm subsided, Beetle fanned it afresh.

"Eh? What? What was that you were saying to McLagan?"

"I only said I thought the papers ought to have been looked at before they were given out, sir."

"Hear, hear!" from a back bench.

Mr. King wished to know whether Beetle took it upon himself personally to conduct the tradition of the school. His zeal for knowledge ate up another fifteen minutes, during which the prefects showed unmistakable signs of boredom.

"'*I'm* Mister Corkran.'"

"Oh, it was a giddy time," said Beetle, afterwards, in dismantled Number Five. "He gibbered a bit, and I kept him on the gibber, and then he dictated about a half of Dolabella & Co."

"*Good* old Dolabella! Friend of mine. Yes?" said Stalky.

"Then we had to ask him how every other word was spelt, of course, and he gibbered a lot more. He cursed me and MacLagan (Mac played up like a trump) and Randall,

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and the 'materialised ignorance of the unscholarly middle classes,' 'lust for mere marks,' and all the rest. It was what you might call a final exhibition—a last attack—a giddy par-ergon."

"But o' course he was blind squiffy when he wrote the paper. I hope you explained that?" said Stalky.

"Oh, yes. I told Tulke so. I said an immoral prefect an' a drunken house-master were legitimate inferences. Tulke nearly blubbed. He's awfully shy of us since Mary's time."

Tulke preserved that modesty till the last moment—till the journey-money had been paid, and the boys were filling the brakes that took them to the station. Then the three tenderly constrained him to wait awhile.

"You see, Tulke, you may be a prefect," said Stalky, "but I've left the Coll. *Do* you see, Tulke, dear?"

"Yes, I see. Don't bear malice, Stalky."

"Stalky! Curse your impudence, you young cub," shouted Stalky, magnificent in top-hat, stiff collar, spats, and high-waisted, snuff-coloured ulster. I want you to understand that *I'm* Mister Corkran, an' you're a dirty little schoolboy."

"Besides bein' frabjously depraved," said McTurk. "'Wonder you aren't ashamed to foist your company on pure-minded boys like us."

"Come on, Tulke," cried Naughten, from the prefects' brake.

"Yes, we're comin'. Shove up and make room, you Collegers. You've all got to be back next term, with your 'Yes, sir,' and 'Oh, sir,' an' 'No, sir,' an' 'Please, sir'; but before we say good-bye we're going to tell you a little story. Go on, Dickie (this to the driver); we're quite ready. Kick that hat-box under the seat, an' don't crowd your Uncle Stalky."

"As nice a lot of high-minded youngsters as you'd wish to see," said McTurk, gazing round with bland patronage. "A trifle immoral, but then—boys will be boys. It's no good tryin' to look stuffy, Carson. *Mister* Corkran will now oblige with the story of Tulke an' Mary Yeo!"

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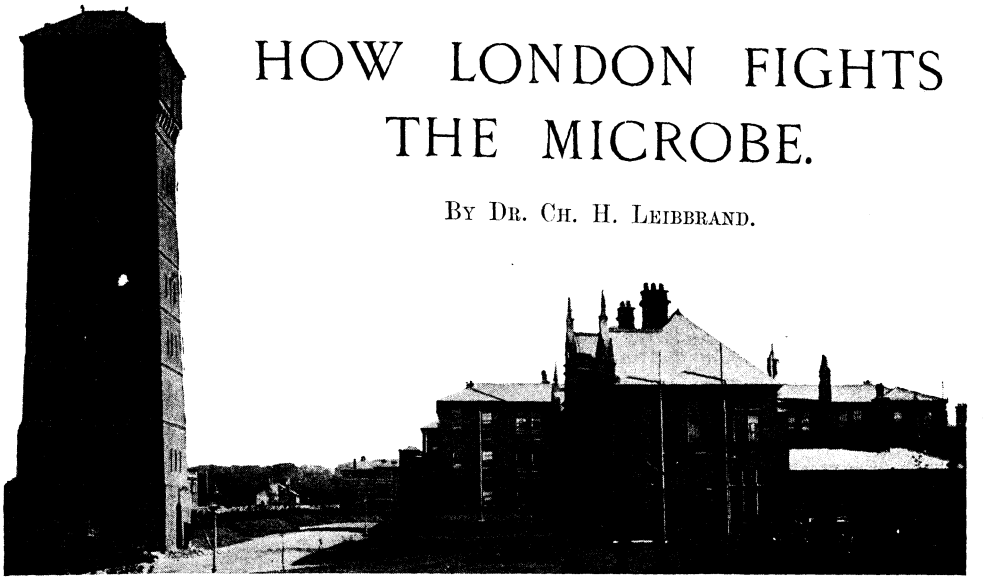
HOW LONDON FIGHTS THE MICROBE.

By Dr. Ch. H. Leibbrand.

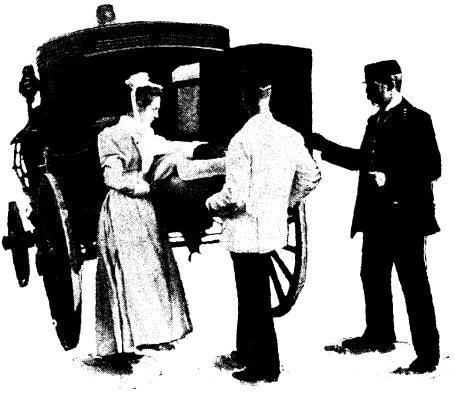


THE WATER TOWER AND ONE OF THE HOMES, BROOK HOSPITAL.

A THOUSAND and one battles are daily fought in and around London. It is a war in which human skill and self-sacrifice incessantly fight the diphtheria and typhoid fever microbes—each one in itself, it is true, immeasurably smaller than a snowflake, yet collectively fatal and tenacious in their purpose of destruction, and mightily capable of upheaving in a night a whole city, a nation, a country, and even a continent.

Witness some time ago, when the escape of a few bubonic plague germs in Austria's capital sent terror thrilling through Europe. Witness Vienna itself and its usually so merry population. They bubbled and seethed, they ached and moaned at the mercy of these bacteria. It seemed to be forgotten that to them the vibrations caused by the slightest sound are frequently as destructive as the rollings of an earthquake are to man. It seemed to be forgotten that for billions of these bacteria the raising of their appropriate temperature by but a few degrees strikes the death knell. The bacilli appeared to be ready to fall upon the nation as mildew falls blightingly upon the ripening harvest; and like chaff before the storm vanished the people's belief that medical, that bacteriological science possessed the mastery over these various epidemic fiends. So panic and riot and the fatal germs seemed thenceforth to have their sway.

But, as might have been foreseen, the minds that had tamed such foes once were able to tame them again and to destroy them even in their first onslaught. A few victims, to be sure, fell to their attack. These, however, were not of the citizens; they were of the number of those who had conjured up the plague fiends. And the sacrifice of these victims was not in vain. It emphasised the importance of bacteriological knowledge. It demonstrated that a people and a city are fairly safe from epidemics so long as they



ARRIVAL OF A FEVER PATIENT AT THE HOSPITAL.

are guarded by clinical, by bacteriological institutions.

Such a fortunate stronghold is the city of London, thanks to the thousand and one battles that are daily being fought for its safety in its eleven hospitals for infectious diseases. These are the bulwarks and defences of the Metropolis. They protect it against the microbe foes with whom but for them

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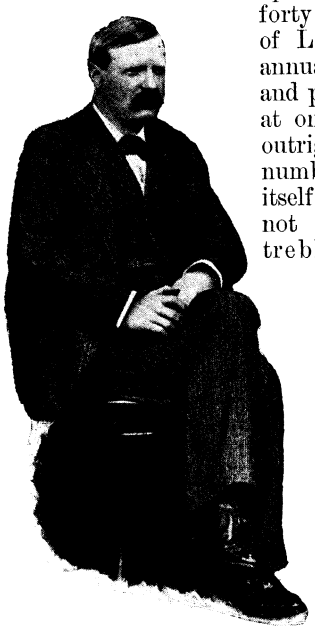
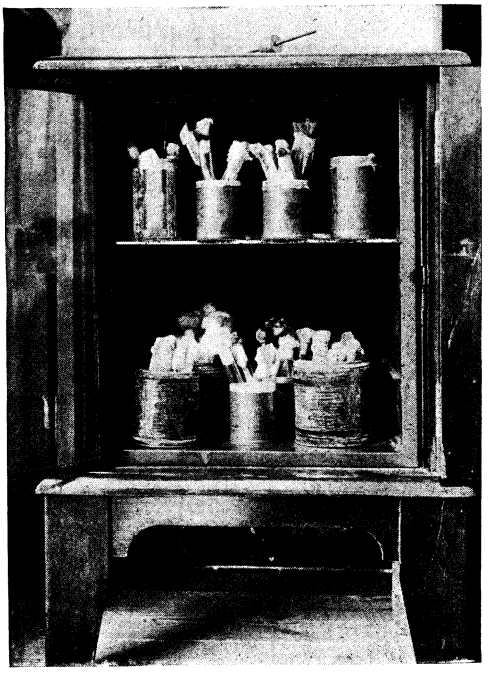
armies of men would battle in vain. For these steal upon you unseen and unsuspected. Thus they steal even now, in times of truce, upon no fewer than forty-four thousand of London's citizens annually, prostrating and paralysing, if not at once killing them outright. That this number, though in itself large enough, is not doubled, is not trebled, is indeed mainly due to those eleven hospitals for "acute" cases, with their clinical schools and laboratories. Without those medical forts, the death-roll from the microbe foe, happily averaging at present only two thousand in the course of a year, might average two thousand within one week. As it is, in those hospital centres, billions of fatal bacteria are hourly rendered harmless to the safety of the mammoth city and of its mammoth population. And there, too, strange to say, billions of others are intentionally reared, equally for the safety of London. These are experimented upon by the bacteriologist for the purpose of carrying the war into the enemy's camp, because with the bacilli fiends it is a case of *similia similibus vincuntur*.



DR. MCCOMBIE,
Superintendent of the Brook Hospital.

On the heights of Shooter's Hill, near Blackheath, in the county of Kent, one such armoury for waging unrelenting war on the microbe world spreads its protecting wings. Its name is the Brook Hospital, though it might also be called the Brook Citadel. For, if London's other ten similar institutions are fittingly comparable to medical forts, the Brook may justly be termed their citadel. As is at once suggested in our illustrations, you feel its importance and potency for the health interests of London the moment you see it rise, extending its well-balanced proportions from under the shadow of its huge water tower, far above the surrounding landscape. And, stepping nearer, you are promptly convinced that in its construction are embodied whatever improvements medical and architectural sciences have discovered in the course of the century—a century so rich in inventions for the protection of man. Nor are you disillusioned after passing inside.

Go where you will over the twenty-three acres on which the institution is erected. Go through the twelve scarlet fever, the two enteric fever and the ten diphtheria wards; go through the special separate pavilions for concurrent infectious diseases, such as scarlet fever and diphtheria, or scarlet fever and chicken pox, or measles and diphtheria, as well as for intercurrent diseases and diseases of doubtful diagnosis; go into the airing courts, the laundries, and the administrative blocks; inspect the nurses' home, the water tower and reservoirs—and you will find everywhere most ingenious provisions for isolation and disinfection. Equally perfect, too, are the arrangements for introducing light and air — another important factor in the anti-microbe crusade, inasmuch as these infinitesimally small organisms are most at home where impurities ferment and decay best.



CULTURE TUBES IN THE INCUBATOR.

Take, for instance, the combined process of warming and ventilating the wards. Low pressure hot-water pipes are carried under

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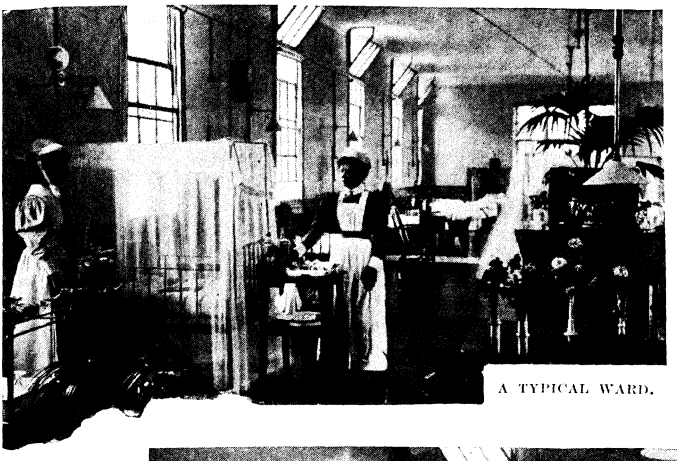

A TYPICAL WARD.

the ground floor to and fro. From these branch circulations rise to radiators in the wards. Each branch consists of a number of copper spiral coils enclosed in an easily cleanable iron case, with open grating on top and in front. These cases are placed against the external walls under the windows, and into them the fresh air from the heath land without is admitted through glazed channels, regulated by valves. After being warmed by its contact with the copper coils, it is then introduced into the ward. There are further valvular gratings in the external walls, under each bed, at the floor line. And in order that the forces of light be brought into action to support those of fresh air, there are as many windows as there are beds in each ward; the ordinary double-hung sashes being supplemented by hopper-hung fanlights. Finally, "exhaust" ventilation is provided for by open fireplaces and vertical shafts.

These excellent provisions and arrangements, however, are merely precautionary defensive measures. They are but the culmination of a vast system of notification and removal of any infectious diseases case—a system that had to pass through three stages of evolution before it reached its present gigantic proportions.

A TRACHEOTOMY OPERATION.

The surgeon opening the patient's windpipe for the insertion of the tracheotomy tube.

THE MATRON AND SOME OF HER STAFF

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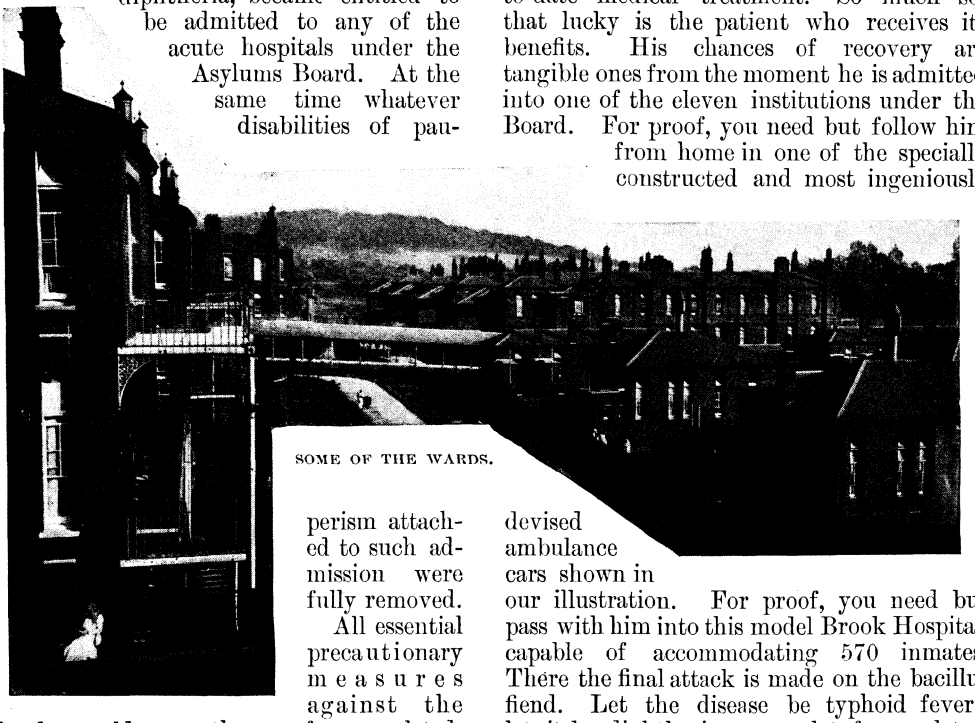
From 1871 till July, 1887, whilst such notification was voluntary, the admission of the patient was determined by an order from the relieving officer or workhouse master, accompanied by a certificate from the medical officer of the parish or union to which the patient was chargeable. In 1887 this system was then modified in that henceforth *any* qualified medical practitioner could certify for admission, whereas notification was made compulsory. Finally, in virtue of the Metropolitan Public Health Act, 1891–92, any person living within the county of London, and reasonably believed to suffer from fever, small-pox, scarlet fever, or diphtheria, became entitled to be admitted to any of the acute hospitals under the Asylums Board. At the same time whatever disabilities of pauperism attached to such admission were fully removed.



SOME OF THE WARDS.

All essential precautionary measures against the microbe world were thus so far completed. Not that they were made ideally perfect. As Mr. Duncombe Mann, the courteous Clerk to the Board, himself admits, there is still room for improvement. Take the process of notifying an infectious disease. At present the notifications are sent to the Medical Officer of Health of the district in which the patient is resident. These districts are under the control of vestries in the case of single parishes, and of district boards of works in the case of united parishes, both of which are the sanitary authority for their respective administrative areas. The admission of patients into the Asylums Board hospitals must be assigned to the Poor Law districts which are responsible for the payment of the cost of the patients' maintenance in hospital. The respective boundaries of the Sanitary Districts and the Poor Law Districts are, however, not identical. That inconvenience, confusion, and waste of money and time result from this overlapping of the various Metropolitan areas, is obvious.

Still, the system of notification and removal works as perfectly as it possibly can. It supplies a thorough support to the excellent structural and sanitary arrangements at the hospitals, and it gives fullest scope to the curative operation of the up-to-date clinical provisions, and of an equally up-to-date medical treatment. So much so, that lucky is the patient who receives its benefits. His chances of recovery are tangible ones from the moment he is admitted into one of the eleven institutions under the Board. For proof, you need but follow him from home in one of the specially constructed and most ingeniously devised ambulance cars shown in our illustration. For proof, you need but pass with him into this model Brook Hospital, capable of accommodating 570 inmates. There the final attack is made on the bacillus fiend. Let the disease be typhoid fever; let it be diphtheria or scarlet fever; let it be a complication of two of these—the splendidly fitted-up laboratory, with its incubator, as well as the highly trained and experienced doctors, make sure of the case being properly—that is, bacteriologically—diagnosed.

Indeed, it is only with the aid of such bacteriological diagnosis that the very inmost character of a microbe infection is at once laid bare. Thanks to this, the promptest application of specific treatment is possible, simply because, as a result of the researches in the laboratory, the poisons and their antidotes are discovered. The latter are happily ready for immediate use in the most

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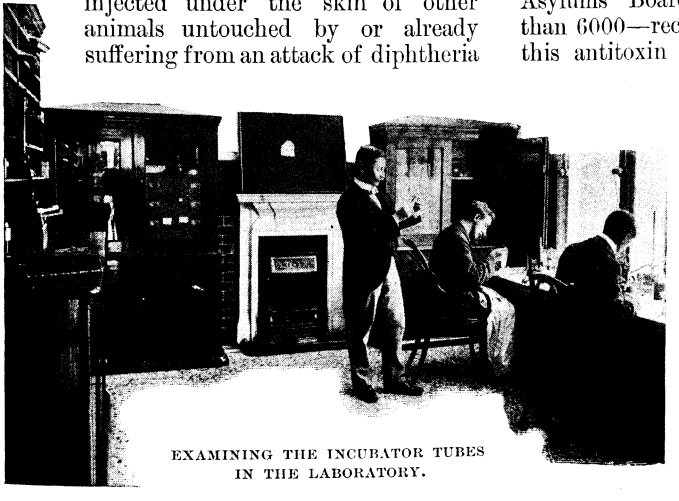
dangerous phase of microbic attack—in the so-called incubation period; for then the microbes have but started to multiply. Not yet are the patient's tissues threatened with wholesale invasion. Not yet are they overrun with deadly corruption by the attacking army of death germs. The poisonous protoplasms are still in their first stages of mobilisation; so their gathering and ever-increasing forces may not only be easily checked, but may even be speedily annihilated.

Look at a diphtheria case. The bacteria which cause the illness are well known. This knowledge of their nature and character led the Berlin professor, Dr. Behring, to the discovery of their adversary—of the antitoxic serum.

He took the diphtheria bacillus, with whose life conditions and necessities he was acquainted, grew and cultivated it, and evolved by this process the genuine diphtheria poison, as Roux had done years before, but having obtained it, Behring went a step further and promptly commenced experiments. Giving the toxin to animals in ever-increasing doses, he ascertained that they could become gradually accustomed even to very large injections without being killed. Nay, he found that in the end they could withstand more poison than would formerly cause death. Invaluable as this discovery was, as invaluable and logical were its further developments and application. Dr. Behring observed that the liquid part of the blood of those animals, thus treated, when injected under the skin of other animals untouched by or already suffering from an attack of diphtheria



EXAMINING THE INCUBATOR TUBES IN THE LABORATORY.

which hitherto would have proved fatal, possessed the startling power of checkmating the disease. Once assured of this all-important fact, the culminating experiment with antitoxin upon *man* infected by diphtheria microbes was both justifiable and safe.

VISITORS WEARING DISINFECTED GOWNS AND HOODS.

And it has proved so successful that whereas previously the mortality was over 37 per cent., since the introduction of the serum treatment it has been reduced to less than 17 per cent.

That the diphtheria patients at the eleven acute hospitals under the Metropolitan Asylums Board—numbering yearly more than 6000—receive the fullest benefit from this antitoxin goes without saying. Let a diphtheria microbe attack spread over days. Let it, as happens in many cases, last but a few hours. The Brook Hospital is equipped with the serum in all grades of concentration and ready for prompt injection, on which so much depends. Thus, a dose of 2000 units concentrated in 10 cubic centimetres, when injected on the first day of the outbreak, will usually secure results which 4000 units, even if concentrated in 5 cubic centimetres, may fail to produce, when injected on the fourth day. Of course, there are also cases when the patient immediately requires 8000 units,

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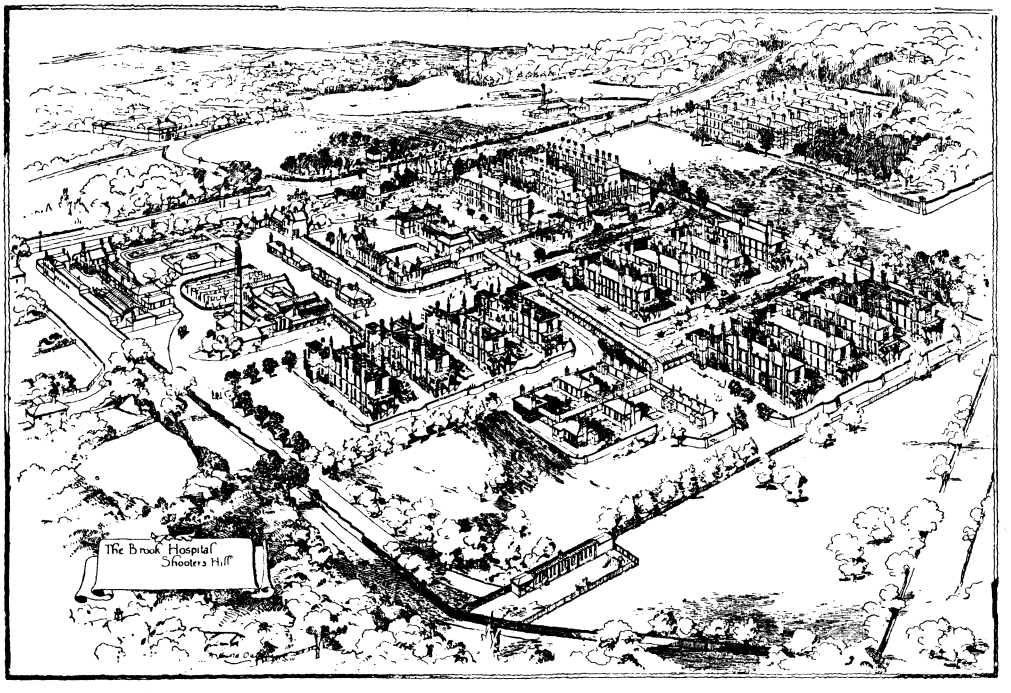
followed at intervals of twelve hours for two consecutive days, by doses of 4000 units each, before his recovery can be hoped for. All depends on the severity of the attack. However, in ordinary cases of diphtheria a cure may, thanks to the antitoxin, well nigh be guaranteed. And this fact supplies an additional proof that the mysteries of the microbe world become more and more thoroughly known. Once they are *fully* understood, the means for the destruction of the death germs will be speedily ascertained.

In the case of diphtheritic croup, for example, antitoxin and surgical skill have already rescued 35 per cent. of the average of 75 per cent. of tracheotomy operations that formerly came to a fatal termination.

Thus the terrors and dangers of death from microbe and bacillus are fast being diminished and brought low. And even now they are already considerably minimised in London, protected as the mammoth city is by its eleven acute hospitals, of which the Brook may justly claim to be a model throughout the European and American Continents.

The illustrations to this article are reproduced from photographs by Messrs. A. & G. Taylor, Photographers to the Queen.



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE BROOK HOSPITAL BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS.

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Field Felonies AND Bye-way Robberies

By Harry T. Hickling

Illustrated by A. J. Wall.

ROBBERY on the King's highway has become such a thing of the past that its inconveniences are thrown into the shade by the halo of romance.

Roads which come below the old turnpike standard cover an enormous mileage and give access to much unfrequented country. On these bye-ways robbery still is rife, the offences causing often more annoyance than loss, and—alas! for the inherent love of wickedness in human nature—giving considerable delight and satisfaction to the perpetrators.

These offences are not necessarily criminal except in the eye of the farmer or game preserver. What lover of Nature can put his hand upon his heart and say his behaviour in the country has at all times been guiltless, and might never have been open to objection from either of these men had they unexpectedly appeared on the scene?

When you left town primroses may have been rather a drug in the market at three bunches a penny; nevertheless, you will risk spoiling your new spring cycling suit getting into a cover and picking a handful. Why will you be so quiet over it unless from the consciousness that the keeper, if he knew, would not like your intruding upon the courtships of his pheasants?

One approves of the infliction of a heavy fine for sordidly stealing mushrooms by the hundredweight in the early morning, but cannot resist straying from the path to gather one seen here and another there. You tell yourself that the farmer does not care to take the trouble to gather them, and refuse to admit that your action in the matter is considerably influenced by his having just passed you, evidently on his way to the market. However, if the apparently fine mushrooms have been left by him because they are only what the country folks call "Abrahams," and think only good enough to make ketchup, your cupidity is not likely to go unpunished.

Of a receiver of stolen goods I most properly have a wholesome horror, but conscience tells me I am not guiltless of ever having been one. It is rude to ask the giver of any present where he got it from or what he gave for it, but in some cases it would be very unwise to know. When this is so, I confess the gift has an additional charm, for

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which I generally find I pay quite the value of the present, and sometimes run the risk of paying much more.

That has been my experience with Dick, who is a good specimen of the picker-up of unconsidered trifles in the country.

His acquaintance I first made on the road. From his hobble and crawl I wondered at his wide knowledge of the county till he told me he was a cattle drover.

There is no evidence I would more willingly give than that against men charged with carting off in the night well-berried holly, thus robbing our lanes of their winter glory; but when Dick turned up with what had undoubtedly been the flaming crown of a fine tree, I could only accept it with thanks, not overlooking the fact that the occasion was appropriate for the presentation of a Christmas box—an amount more than I should otherwise have spent in festive decorations.

Knowing that Dick's movements were chiefly dependent upon the cattle sales held in the neighbouring towns, and that he generally put up at the doss-houses, I did not think he had much facility for keeping poultry, but he came round and left half a dozen new-laid eggs when they were very scarce. I thought he did it out of gratitude, but he met me next day, and I could not refuse to accommodate him temporarily with the loan of a shilling.

So far I had not seriously compromised myself, but, alas! a day or so before the first of October, Dick appeared at the door carrying two milk cans. He said he wanted to see the master, and pushed his way in. I was taken rather aback when in answer to my question, "Had he gone into the milk business?" he produced from each pail a cock bird—it is indiscreet to mention the species. "An' it's to meeself I was saying as you'd loike to have 'em sure—the beauties," he said, stroking the lovely breast plumage.

A son of Erin has ever a coaxing way with him; Dick may get into trouble if he takes these further, I disinterestedly (?) reflect, so accept the birds with thanks. I have paid dearly for that weak moment. Dick now meets me with an air implying that there is a secret between us which he will never divulge to another if only he can again drink my health. And he does.

Dick is a good specimen of that numerous and various class—bye-way robbers. But the most perfect types are to be found among the gipsies. They in their roaming outdoor life manage to get many of their wants supplied direct from Nature, saving themselves the troublesome use of coinage. They, however, like the rest of us, cannot live without some "ready," but the raw material for making the goods they offer for sale is also obtained this way.

Their wanderings are not so aimless as they appear. They may be influenced by an order for "black sally-wood" for ladder rungs, the want of willow for making pegs and wicker-work, of dogwood for meat skewers, or rushes for plaiting, ling for besoms—they pretty well know where to find them.

These wants, with two others, namely, bite for their horses and provision for the pot, make the gipsies prefer rough country and unfrequented roads.

There is ever a feud between them and the keepers, the latter relentlessly harrying the former.

A gipsy can give an Irishman points in being smooth-tongued, and should he when roaming down the hedgeside meet a keeper he will swear he is only looking for an "urchin" for supper, and volunteer the most solemn oaths that he will do no damage if allowed to proceed. But keeper believes nothing good of a gipsy, and is not to be got over.

Perhaps he knows a partridge is sitting on her nest near, and is sure she and her eggs will be missing if he does not turn off the man, for it is needless to say the gipsy thinks game in season all the year round and is not particular about his eggs being a bit set.

To one uninitiated in woodcraft the quick, observant eye of an efficient keeper is a revelation, but the keeper himself will allow that a gipsy is quite his equal.

The latter is up to all the smaller poacher's usual dodges and has at least one of his own. The reader may have sometimes noticed the presence of a bantam cock in gipsy camps. He is a great pet and a useful one, for when passing a cover the owner will affectionately tickle the feathers on the bird's breast, making him crow, and if any cock pheasants are in the vicinity they will reply to the challenge. Then steel spurs are put on the bantam and he is taken into the wood, the gipsy hanging round out of sight. A pheasant soon comes to the unequal combat and, in the words of the keeper, "As soon as he's worrited—squats, and the gipsy drops down on him."

A keeper finding a camp pitched on his beat will threaten the occupiers with unpleasant consequences unless they clear off. They will probably comply with his orders,

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if they think he can bring sufficient men to support him, or if a police-station be near. A band once trifled too long with the short temper of a head-keeper of my acquaintance. He went and evicted them last thing at night, commencing operations by kicking over the pot with their supper in and demolishing their fire. This rather despotic action enraged the "Bedouins" into producing their knives, but nothing serious ensued. "I can't say I should have exactly liked it myself," he said to me with, however, a grin that showed no repentance; "it must be very riling to be turned adrift again just as you'd settled down and hobbled the horses for the night, and were thinking of going to have a good hot supper and then turn in."

The necessity for hobbling the horses is often the result of one of the many unscrupulous actions the gipsies indulge in, namely, that of stealing a good feed for their animals. For the life led appears to increase in the latter their memory of locality and direction, and had they recently been surreptitiously turned into a field of good keep, unless tethered or hobbled they would return in the night, though it were miles away.

It is on account of such offences that the farmer is a very useful ally to a single-handed keeper. The gipsies are rather a lazy lot in the morning. A keeper once found a camp asleep and the horses in some mowing grass, a white one having been artfully covered by a dark cloth the better to escape observation. He drove them out and into the farmer's yard, and knocked him up. The farmer got one pound compensation from the vagrants, and none have since been seen in the district. All is fair in war, I suppose, and a keeper finding his enemy's camp still in slumber in the early morning has not scrupled to turn their cattle into a field and then go and tell the farmer of the trespass.

A well-preserved estate looked over by an efficient staff of men is but rarely poached, and then generally a large *coup* of the half-tame reared birds is made by a gang. It is where the shooting goes with small holdings, and is often let, that minor offences are most rife. There you will find the small keeper the quondam poacher, or *vice versa* if the shoot has become vacant.

I know a keeper of that ilk, who was as proud of his past exploits as any rascal converted by the Salvation Army is of his.

"He produced from each pail a cock bird."

He assured me "he'd bin learned by as good a butty as ever was—a daring devil up to every move—for he'd done altogether fifteen years in prison"—a doubtful qualification, I should think, for his practice-time must have been rather curtailed and evidently often unfortunate.

His chief idea is to entice the birds of his neighbour on his own land. Partridges will

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be induced to come regularly in the early morning to boiled rice, but one day they are treated to it soaked in whisky or brandy, with the result that they indulge in a siesta till suddenly aroused by the sportsmen. I ventured to express my doubts as to whether that was sportsmanlike, whereupon Ned expostulating said, "Poachin'? I don't call that there poachin', I calls it borrowin' 'em."

I once asked this man whether a great many pheasant eggs are not stolen, and how they are disposed of. "Yer see, sir, there generally be a farm 'and about as ain't pertickler about picking 'em up. He knows you want to rare a few birds, an' he comes round and axes what you'll give. Then he goes to the next keeper to see if he'll go dipper inter his pocket, an' 'im what dips dippest has 'em, an' he's got to look mighty near as he don't buy some of his own eggs."

The bye-ways hitherto alluded to have been made by human footsteps, but the least observant must know that there are others. He cannot when on the mountains or downs have failed to notice the network made by sheep tracks, or the runs which radiate from a rabbit-warren. The field naturalist knows the ground is full of bye-paths of animals and insects. The air itself may be said to have tracks. A kestrel may be seen to fly, and for a time to hover over a field, then sail off. If you are round about the same time next day you will probably see this "windhover" going over the same route. An owl may be seen night after night passing down the same hedge. Even the many varied evolutions of the swallow when watched for some time appear to have some repetitions.

A keeper well knows these bye-ways and uses this knowledge to reduce such enemies as stoats, weasels, rats, and hedgehogs. These he counts among his field felons for whom there is only one sentence—the death one—and, as with the highway robber of old, their bodies are left hanging in the open as an example to others, but in these cases chiefly as evidence that the keeper has not been slothful in his master's business.

The keeper's "pantry," as the place where these malefactors are hung is often called, is always an interesting though malodorous spot. You are inclined to think that a fair trial has not been given to some of the offenders, and that hanging is the fate of other animals beside the dog consequent upon being given a bad name. For instance, the bodies of several squirrels once made me ask the guardian of the game what their offences were. He shook his head and said he "wouldn't like to say they didn't go for eggs." I expressed my disbelief, but found I could not remove the ban. "Well, they do a sight of damage to the trees, anyway, for they're so fond of biting off the shoots—'specially the top ones of spruces."

In fact Velveteens becomes very suspicious during the nesting season, when his enemies are no doubt much increased. Should he the least suspect any bird or beastie of any

STOAT DRIVING A PARTRIDGE FROM HER NEST.

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partiality for an ovarious diet, he is sure to give his employer the benefit of the doubt.

The pluck with which stoats and weasels will drive off the sitting bird, and the cleverness they show in carrying off the eggs, cannot be expected to condone their crime.

"'I've knowed un taake the very crows what I've hung up for mawkins.'"

One is generally warned not to touch them when freshly killed lest their smell be left on one's hands, but really there is very little about them when dead. The offensive odour is only used as a defensive of life.

Speaking to a man once on this subject, I was told he had seen his dog, who was game enough to face anything, when he got hold of a stoat, throw it into the air and shake his head, being sickened by the stench. "He'd do that half a dozen times afore he'd bring himself to kill it. I've offen sin one run into a hole as ran through a bank. I've stopped up one end and begun at t'other to dig un out with a narrer graft, and as soon as I got to un, he'd bite at the tool and stink *sadly*."

The animals mentioned are likely to be the only ones shown, but there are other furred victims which for some reason or other

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are not exhibited. When a keeper kills a cat he wisely refrains from making the fact public. The owner being probably one of the gentler sex, who would never admit that her puss ever poached, does not lessen the chances of the man being out of favour with his neighbours.

The rats are too common to be put in this collection, though the farm hands often nail them to the barn doors.

Reynard's importance in the sporting field precludes him from being outlawed, but I would incidentally remark that burials are not infrequently made under such unobtrusive circumstances as to remind one of that of Sir John Moore. The fox's craftiness and comprehensive larceny entitle him to that position among vermin which the gipsy has the proud privilege to occupy among his fellow men. "I've knowed un taake the very crows what I've hung up for mawkins," a farm labourer once said to me, and a keeper knows who is the culprit when he finds only a few feathers left by a nest, for the fox, like his human type the gipsy, goes for both birds and eggs.

The eggs are eaten to be carried to the cubs, and for their benefit are vomited—an unrefined way to serve a meal, no doubt, but a practice which breeders will tell you ages of domesticity have not yet eradicated from dogs.

Apparently a fox's scent is not so keen for finding eggs as that of some other animals, for he rarely touches a nest except where the eggs are hard set, and have consequently a strong smell.

What a contrast to the fox is the hedgehog! When eggs have been eaten and some smashed about, it is known a visit has been made by the latter. If it were not for this one offence the keeper might not molest him. The farmer also slays this animal—is it because Hodge is not yet convinced that it does not suck the milk from the cows' teats as they lie in the fields at night? The keeper knows the hedgehog's bye-way and sets a trap there. If he catches one he takes it out and throws it on the ground near. "Urchins always come to each other's funerals," he will tell you, and it appears to be true, for I have seen as many as a dozen dead ones lying about. A sinful waste of good meat, I suppose the gipsies would say, who are said greatly to relish the animal cooked in his own fat by being encased in clay and put in the fire. When cooked, the spines and skin come away with the clay.

The country people never seem to take kindly to the hedgehog's flesh, but those who confess to having tried it say that it is like a rabbit's, but sweeter.

I have spoken of the furred field felons, but not of the feathered, for an article must not only have an end, but also a limit. In this respect it differs from a bye-way, which very frequently wanders far and so imperceptibly dwindles that the follower at last finds himself in the trackless open country. And I hope what I have written may lead my reader to that far from unpleasant experience.

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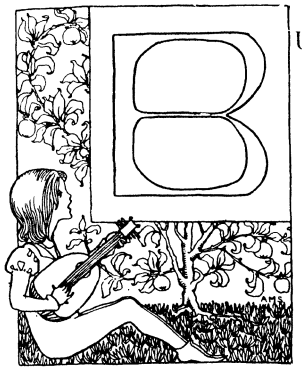
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE.

By E. M. Jameson.

Illustrated by Frances Ewan.



UT it's such a *little* bwoken place," remarked Rory disconsolately; "we'll never be able to get in."

The light of the rose-tinted dawn fell upon the children as they huddled together on the broad window-seat, looking in their white nightgowns like two cherubs pausing before taking flight.

The golden head and the dark one were laid very close together, for did not nurse inhabit the inner room? They spoke with bated breath, a delicious sense of danger in the air rendering their behaviour all the more piquant.

Each pair of eyes was fixed longingly upon the *ultima thule* of their desires—the garden of their next-door neighbour. There it lay before the nursery window in all its tantalising beauty, a stretch of emerald lawn where willows swept their long green branches to the ground, and copper beeches shone like gold in the sunshine, with never a hint of a gravel path across the grass to detract from its beauty.

The dewdrops glittered upon the sward this morning in the light of the newly awakened day, and the birds were noisily getting ready for breakfast.

A thrush hopped about the lawn and looked up at the children with its head on one side, as if to say, "Why don't you come out?"

Rory unconsciously shook his head, and the bird flew away. "It's vewy wong, nurse says, to go where you've no business to be; but"—he breathed a regretful sigh—"I wish that bweak in the hedge was bigger."

The morality of this remark was doubtful; but Mab was not in the mood to cavil.

"'Why—couldn't—we—go—now?'"

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"I don't see why we shouldn't go," she said, watching another member of the feathered tribe, a sparrow this time, hopping along the grass. "We might make the hole just a *weeny* bit bigger."

Her tone was wheedling, for Rory sometimes evinced signs of irritating virtue. He shook his head, and every curl on it took some of the golden light from the sky. "I b'lieve we'd better not, unless"—a brilliant thought irradiating his face—"unless you'd go first. You're fatter than me, a little, and you could wiggle in. It wouldn't be as bad as bweaking it, would it?"

"There wouldn't be much difference," remarked Mab, who could hardly be accused of glossing over their intended crime. "But we've just *got* to get in somehow, and it doesn't much matter how we do it. Have you forgotten the pond with the gold-fish that Hudson told us about?"

"Of course I haven't," said Rory impatiently, his face puckering up in the effort to keep from crying; "why, don't you wemember we'd got the fishing lines all weady——"

He broke off suddenly and pressed his cheek against the pane.

Mab pattered softly across the room to the cupboard. From the recesses of a Noah's Ark she drew out two pieces of string, each having attached to it a large bent pin.

Rory turned round and watched her, his scruples vanishing at the sight of these alluring weapons of war. Mab could have used no more insidious form of temptation. The ark suddenly fell to the ground with a clatter. They held their breath, but no nurse appeared. Mab returned to the point of vantage and put her lips to Rory's ear.

"Why—couldn't- we—go—now?"

Rory's eyes grew large.

"*Now?*"

"This very second," replied Mab, who was undoubtedly of the stuff of which explorers are made; "it's the only time we can, and if nurse didn't wake up *then*, she won't now."

She dangled the bits of string in full view of Rory, and he fell.

"We mustn't stop to put much on," she said, seeing he had yielded, "just our dressing-gowns, and slippers, perhaps."

She looked longingly at the cool green lawn as she helped Rory into his scarlet dressing-gown, and kicked his woolly slippers towards him. Then she put on her own and led the way out of the room.

"We can't unbolt the big door," objected Rory in a stage whisper.

But already Mab showed the resourceful capabilities of her sex. She had provided for all contingencies.

"There's the study window," she said; "it's quite easy to open, and Hudson often forgets to fasten it."

They traversed the dangers that lay along the route; the creaking board on the third stair from the top was safely circumnavigated, as also was a forbidding-looking ancestor, who stared down at them from the picture-frame with eyes full of meaning.

Rory shivered as he crept past, but the delicious air of the outside world braced his wavering nerves, while Mab pranced about in a silent ecstasy, kicking off by accident one of her scarlet slippers into a geranium bed.

"Never mind," she said, placing her bare foot on the grass and giving a delighted shiver as the dewy coolness touched it; "it's ever so much nicer without—as nice as paddling, almost." And hand in hand they raced round the corner, out of sight of the silent windows.

Mab tossed her long dark hair from her face as they approached the gap in the hedge.

"What if it's been mended?" suggested Rory, who was possessed this morning of a tendency to throw cold water on every scheme. But the gap was still there.

Mab knelt down and looked through.

"It's even *more* like a fairy tale close to," she said admiringly; "you know, like the place in 'Beauty and the Beast'; and there's a rose-bush somewhere." She raised her tip-tilted nose and looked round at Rory with dancing blue eyes, "I *must* go."

"S'pose the beast weally lives there?" suggested Rory apprehensively.

"Well, you know," Mab paused in the act of compressing herself into the smallest possible compass, "he was horrible to look at, but he wasn't really horrid in his *mind*."

"What's his mind?" asked Rory, but Mab had no time for reply. She was half way through now and there came a sound of ripping garments.

Rory benefited by her difficulties, and the next moment this *terra incognita* stretched before them. Here were the willows, and on the other side, out of view of their nursery window, lay the large stone basin containing the gold-fish. In their wildest imaginings it had never appeared like this. There were three little boys grouped together on a rocky islet in the centre, each blowing a trumpet, out of which water spouted into the basin.

They climbed on the stone edge that ran

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round the pond, their legs dangling, and only then did Mab discover that her remaining shoe had taken flight.

The gold-fish darted lazily in and out from their retreat among the rocks. Rory's sportsman-like instincts were awakened.

"Here's your line," he said, drawing the pieces of string from his dressing-gown pocket. But Mab threw hers aside.

"They're too pretty to catch," she said.

Rory dangled his line into the water quite unconscious of the fact that it was guiltless of bait, but Mab remembered, and it was to her a cause for rejoicing. She swung her bare legs to and fro luxuriously. The sun shone warmly down on their scarlet figures.

"It was worth coming for, wasn't it?" she said presently; "why, it must be nearly breakfast time." But Rory, a sight at that moment to have delighted the author of "The Compleat Angler," was too absorbed in the vagaries of his line to reply. It had in reality caught in a cleft of the rock, but a thrill of anticipation shot through him. Was it possible that, at last, he had a bite! The excitement spread to Mab, who earnestly hoped he had not. They were too absorbed to notice the approach of an elderly gentleman, who had been much exercised in his mind as to the meaning of these two red specks. He, too, had risen early and had come out before breakfast to enjoy the morning air.

Meantime the drama round the fishpond was nearing its *dénouement*. In the excitement of the moment Rory stood up to play his fish; there was a splash, and he joined his supposed victim. Mab stood on the brink, waving her hands.

"Oh, Rory, dear Rory, you'll be drowned, and it's all my fault."

The elderly gentleman, regardless of his immaculate morning attire, hastened to the rescue. He bent over the edge with his walking-stick and scientifically fished for Rory, whose head was above water.

"Take hold," he called out, so cheerily that Mab could have hugged him there and then, and the next moment Rory was drawn up, shivering and dripping and slipperless, but safe.

Mab wept over him, but Rory looked down into the watery element whence he had just emerged.

"In the excitement of the moment Rory stood up to play his fish."

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"Where's my line, I wonder?"

The elderly gentleman was delighted with him.

"Been fishing, eh?" asked he, as if it were the most natural thing in the world for people to come out clad in dressing-gowns to fish.

Rory nodded, unable to take his eyes from the water.

"And was it the piscatorial art that brought you out so early and so lightly clad?"

Mab summoned up courage in a moment.

"I don't know what you mean," she remarked in her direct way, "but we came because we'd heard of the gold-fish, and wanted to see the garden close to. We can only see part of it from our nursery window, and we thought nobody would see us so early. Nurse never lets us get up when we wake, and we wake up *so* early."

"I could not sleep, either," said Rory's rescuer, and now Mab noticed that his eyes were very sad. "Old people wake up early too, sometimes, and I had a long journey yesterday."

"Don't you live here?" asked Rory.

"No, I am only staying here for a few days. But see"—as Rory's teeth began to chatter noisily—"you must come home and have some hot tea. You will both catch terrible colds."

He was very tall and thin and stern-looking, and though she was rather afraid of him, Mab thought him very kind for taking off his coat and wrapping it round Rory. Then Mab solved the problem that had been troubling her for the last few minutes.

"Why, of course," she exclaimed, "Rory, don't you see? He's exactly like the picture mother has over her bedroom mantelpiece, the one we always call the Right Honourable."

The elderly gentleman started violently, and his eyeglass dropped with a little click against a button.

Unconsciously he turned to Rory, as if eager to know his opinion.

"The Right Honouwable's hair isn't nearly so white, and I b'lieve he's wather more better looking," said Rory, with decision.

"Will you tell me your names?" There was a look of painful suspense on the elderly gentleman's face.

"Rory and Mab. Rory's name is Roderick, really, and mine is Mabel."

"But your surname, your father's name?" interrogated the elderly gentleman hoarsely.

"Arkwright."

Mab heard a stifled exclamation; but when she looked up, their new acquaintance was occupied in folding the coat more closely round Rory.

They were moving towards home.

"Rory's called Roderick after the Right Honourable," resumed Mab, presently.

"And who is the Right Honourable?"

"I don't know," said Mab perplexedly, "someone mother loves very much and says we must love, too; and she cries sometimes when she talks about him. But I don't see how you can love somebody very much if you've never seen him. We've tried, Rory and I, ever so often, but it's hard, isn't it?" She spoke very wistfully.

"Quite impossible," said the elderly gentleman. Then he coughed a little and looked uncomfortable.

"Do you think you could love me a little, Mab, just a little?" He spoke almost humbly. "Not at first, perhaps, but if you knew I was your grandfather? I am the same as the Right Honourable. I came hundreds of miles, Mab, in the hope of seeing your mother; do you think she will see me?"

"I'm sure she'd like to," said Mab, remembering the tears; "she and father will be at breakfast, I expect."

By the time they reached the house, slipping out of the grounds this time by the entrance gates belonging to the owner of the fishponds, Rory was shivering, but happy in the prospect of innumerable joys offered by their new friend, while Mab clung to his hand regardless of Nemesis.

Hudson met them in the hall, struck dumb at the sight of the children's scanty attire, and scandalised beyond expression that an elderly gentleman should come to pay an early call in his shirt-sleeves.

But Hudson had far too practised an eye to be long in error, and had flung open the morning-room door with the air he kept for only the very best people, before Mab had time to whisper, "This is the Right Honourable, Hudson."

The next moment Mab heard a voice that sounded like the Right Honourable's, that yet had a curious quaver in its tones.

"You'll give your old father some breakfast, Mabel, even if he's late by a few years in coming for it? Where's your husband?" And though Mab saw that her mother was crying on the Right Honourable's shoulder, she knew, without being told, that they were happy tears, in no way resembling those she had shed over the Right Honourable's portrait.

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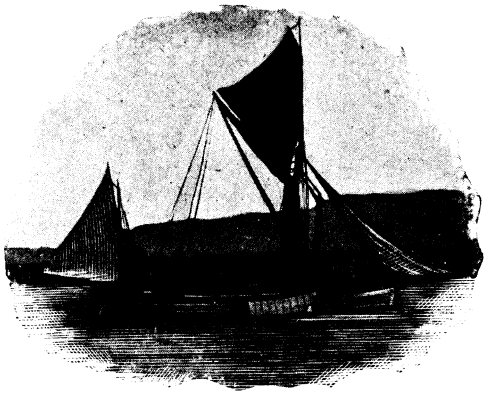


IN A FLOATING STUDIO:

MR. W. L. WYLLIE, A.R.A., AND HIS WORK.

By Frederick Dolman.

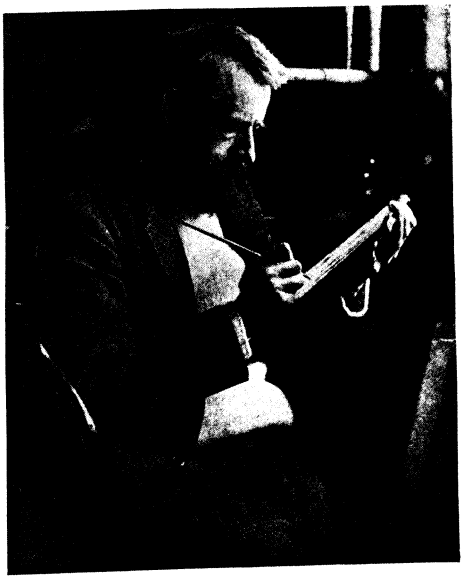
ACCORDING to Ruskin's "Modern Painters," the attempt to depict the sea must end in failure on the part of all but the most powerful artists. In view of this dictum much interest attaches to the method of so successful a sea-painter as Mr. W. L. Wyllie, A.R.A., who may be said to dispute with Mr. J. C. Hook, R.A., the distinction of our greatest living master of an art which must always most strongly appeal to English sympathies.

Mr. Wyllie does not actually live by the sea. But the house to which he recently bade me welcome is only a hundred yards or so from the Medway, and on a clear day Sheerness can be seen from its windows—circumstances which, as I was soon to learn, portended the artist to be almost as much at home on the water as on dry land. Hoo Lodge is the old manor house—considerably enlarged by Mr. Wyllie—of Hoo St. Werburgh, four miles from Rochester, for which he gave up his St. John's Wood residence fourteen years ago, mainly because of its proximity to the waters which he most loves to paint. It is surrounded by pasture fields and has a look of roomy comfort which the interior by no means belies.

The artist received me in a large studio which does not radically differ from that of other distinguished painters of my acquaintance. It was a comparatively recent addition to the house, rendered necessary, I believe, by the dimensions of the picture—it was seventeen feet long—of the "Battle of Trafalgar," which Mr. Wyllie painted for the Junior United Service Club. At that moment another big picture—"The Battle of the Nile"—was resting on an easel there, approaching completion for this year's Academy. But, apart from the actual painting of these big canvases, practically all Mr. Wyllie's work is done elsewhere—most of it in a sailing craft of his own, specially equipped for the purpose—a floating studio such as few other painters possess.

"Let us go down to the dock and have a look at her," says Mr. Wyllie, interpreting my wishes, "although I am afraid she is not much to look at as she lies high and dry on the bank. She is only a barge of 120 tons, you know, although since Mr. Arnold Forster and I bought her we have made various improvements, besides changing her name from the *New Zealand* to the *Four Brothers*."

"The dock," I discovered, consisted of Mr. Wyllie's boathouse, various craft lying on the shore besides the *Four Brothers*, and a little cottage from which a bright, cheery-faced sailor lad came out to do his captain's bidding. A ladder is placed against the



MR. W. L. WYLLIE SKETCHING WITH THE AID OF HIS TELESCOPE.

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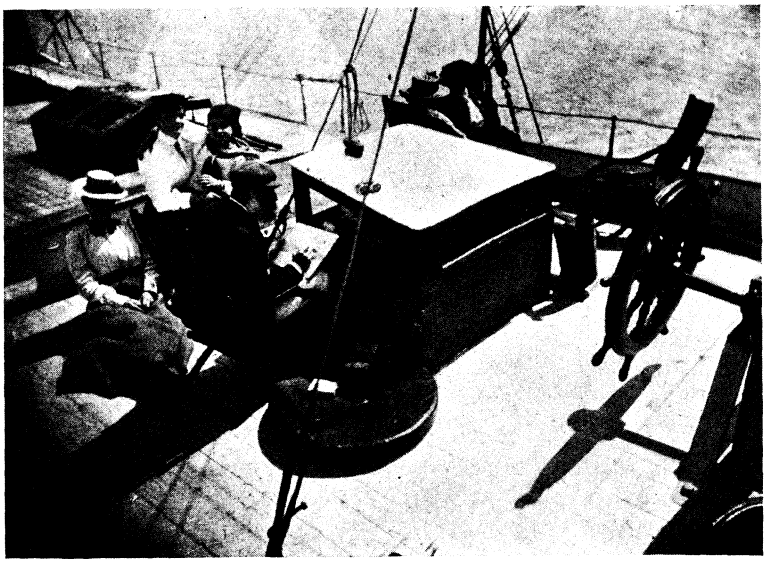
bulwarks of the *Four Brothers*, up which Mr. Wyllie springs with agility, while I follow with more of a landsman's caution. To look at, she is only what she professes to be—a Thames barge, stout and true. But Mr. Wyllie soon reveals to me pretty well all the comforts of a liner, a cosy saloon, well-furnished bedrooms, cooking galley, and bath-room. It is, as he explains to me, quite a second home.

"I go away, you know, for weeks at a time, cruising down the Channel and around the coast, often taking both wife and children with me. We put into port only for fresh provisions, letters, etc., and, whatever the weather, never think of an hotel. I take two seamen with me, but always navigate the boat myself. She draws very little, of course, and we can go almost anywhere."



MR. W. L. WYLLIE AT WORK ON THE "FOUR BROTHERS."

The "studio" is in the roof of the little saloon, consisting of a ladder-seat with a plate-glass "look-out" around it, through which Mr. Wyllie, as he holds brush and canvas in his hands, can survey all points of the sea and sky. He is at the same time protected from wind and rain, and the most violent pitching and rolling on the part of the *Four Brothers* trouble Mr. Wyllie very little in his work. In the saloon below he has a fixed easel, whilst telescopes placed in port-holes on either side of the boat enable him to extend his observation to considerable distances.

Artists generally would find it absolutely impossible, I suppose, to draw or paint on a barge bobbing up and down in mid-Channel. But Mr. Wyllie is almost as good a sailor as he is an artist, having had from boyhood a great fondness for shipping and the sea. It was the custom of his father—who was likewise an artist—to spend the summer at Wimereux, near Boulogne, where he and his brothers learned to swim and to row and to sail with a fearless pleasure. Early in his teens he actually built his own boat, and ever since then he has always owned a craft of some kind or other. Even when they were living in London, he and Mrs. Wyllie—for his wife fully shares his enthusiasm for the sea—would suddenly go off for a trip down Channel in a sprightly little yacht. At "the dock" I am shown the *Marion*, a pretty fifteen-foot gig, now superannuated, in which Mr. and Mrs. Wyllie crossed from Boulogne to Dover on returning from their honeymoon in 1879. To-day, as he stands by the wheel of the *Four Brothers*, in a blue serge suit, with grizzled hair of iron grey, and clear, penetrating eyes, William Lionel Wyllie would pass for a skipper of the gentlemanly sort quite as well as for an associate of the Royal Academy.

"Have you ever had any stirring adventures, Mr. Wyllie, in your pursuit of the picturesque at sea?"

"No," he replies smilingly, "nothing more exciting has befallen the *Four Brothers* than to get beached at Margate last year when we ran there for shelter from a severe gale. She is a splendid sea-boat, although at times rather provokingly slow. Once or twice we have been badly becalmed and provisions have run out, but I don't know that we were ever actually in danger of starvation. I have many times been capsized in smaller craft, but there was never anything worse than a wetting to be feared. I have been able to work in all sorts of weather, even painting during a snowstorm."

These words, nonchalantly spoken though

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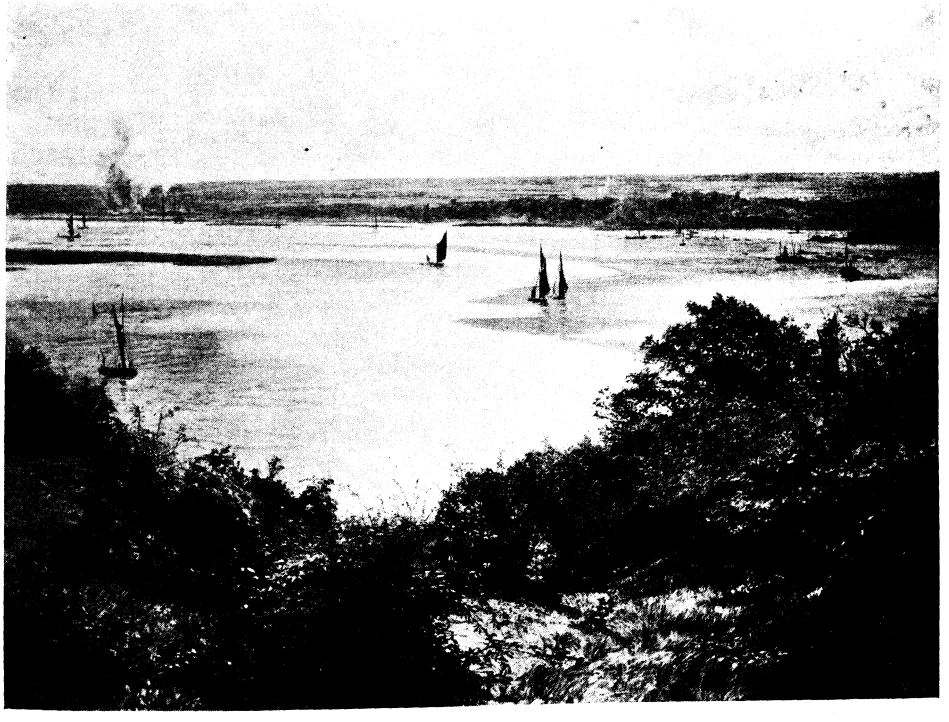
they are, suggest that Mr. Wyllie's remarkable success in telling the story of the sea with his brush has not been achieved without pluck and endurance of a kind not usually associated with the work of an artist. How many men would be willing to spend the best part of a winter on a barge in order to study the season's aspects on sea and river?

HOO LODGE, MR. WYLLIE'S LAND RESIDENCE.

On the *Four Brothers*, as Mr. Wyllie assures me, he has painted most of his Academy pictures during recent years. When not afloat, most of his work is done in a little "den" at the top of Hoo Lodge, which might almost be mistaken for an astronomer's observatory. It is fitted with a powerful telescope, projecting through the wall and resting on a swivel so as to be easily turned by one hand to all points of the compass. With this instrument Mr. Wyllie can observe everything for twenty miles around; the river below is brought close to his easel, and when a barge passes, the features of the man at the tiller can be clearly discerned. Thus Mr. Wyllie has his models constantly before him, and to all the bargees of the Medway, Hoo Lodge is a familiar landmark. The painter is personally acquainted with many of them, and has a much better opinion of their language and disposition than most people form from superficial knowledge.

The panorama which, in this little studio, Mr. Wyllie's ingenuity has provided includes, beyond the river, the spires and chim-



ON THE MEDWAY.
From the picture by W. L. Wyllie, A.R.A.

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neys of Rochester and Chatham — often enveloped in the steam of their cement works—on the one side, and in the distance on the other the outline of Sheerness and the movement and sparkle of the water "where sea and river meet." Whatever the task Mr. Wyllie has in hand, he can always obtain inspiration, and very often suggestion, from this varied view. At the time of my visit to Hoo Lodge he was putting the finishing touches to a series of water colour sketches of the Clyde which, having been commissioned by a Glasgow art firm, had occupied him for a week or two on the great shipbuilding river. As I looked over these it was easy to see how serviceable Mr. Wyllie's telescope would be in correcting his impression as to the flap of a sail or refreshing his recollection of the figure of a steersman.

From this little studio a door opens on to a square, parapeted tower, from which the whole of the surrounding country can be surveyed. I thought this was probably for photographic purposes, but Mr. Wyllie told me that, although he is experienced in the use of the camera, he has found it of very little use in his work. "I find," he says, "that it takes too long to make a copy of a photograph. By the time one has adjusted the camera and got it properly focussed the effect one ought to have painted is lost."

Whenever Mr. Wyllie is in need of "material" for a picture, which can only be obtained further away, he has his floating studio at hand; in a few minutes he can be speeding to whichever spot he pleases. Thus, in the progress of such a work as "The Lion's Whelps," he has often gone on board at night and been at work next day among the warships at Spithead. In the painting of such pictures as "Trafalgar" and "The Nile," on the other hand, Mr. Wyllie has, of course, been obliged to go to books for a great deal of detailed information about the old wooden walls in battle. He has acquainted himself by much patient reading with every authority on the subject, and has found James most useful in giving him the information which a painter of such pictures requires most. "The greatest difficulty I have experienced," Mr. Wyllie added, "in painting 'The Nile,' is to adequately represent the terribly destructive effect of our fire upon some of the French ships."

Mr. Wyllie, notwithstanding his floating studio and his coign of vantage at Hoo Lodge, has his disappointments like every painter of Nature. Last winter he wanted to make some studies of the Channel at the height of a gale, and twice he rushed down to Dover for this purpose; but on both occasions he was just too late, the storm having abated as suddenly as it had arisen.

THE "MAID OF KENT" ON THE DAY OF THE RACE WITH THE "IREX."
Photo by Jacques Holl, Chatham.

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"CRIPPLED, BUT YET UNCONQUERED."

From the Picture by W. L. Wyllie, A.R.A.

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In yachting circles Mr. Wyllie's name is as well known, I suppose, as it is in artistic. He is not only commodore of the Medway Yacht Club, but last year he excited the interest of all English yachtsmen as captain of the *Maid of Kent* in the first contest with the *Irex* between England and Australia for a challenge shield. Mr. Wyllie showed me the design for this shield as it was ready to go to the silversmith's, and I could not but congratulate him upon the skill with which he had introduced and arranged the best symbols of the Mother Country and the great southern Colony.

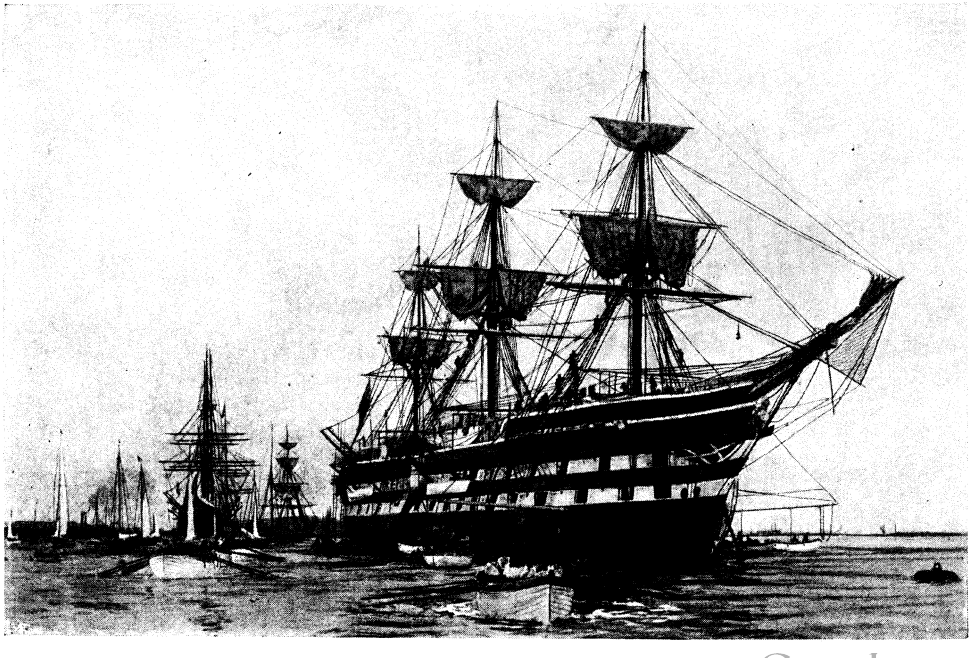
In the "dock" I saw the *Maid of Kent* in her winter *déshabillé*, whilst Mr. Wyllie enthusiastically explained how she so signally defeated the doughty Sydney yacht.

"I rather think," he added, "that the Australians underrated the difficulty of their task on unfamiliar waters. To my mind they did not practise nearly enough in preparation for the race; but they were all very good fellows and excellent sportsmen. Only one point of difference arose between me and their captain, Mr. Foy, and that was rather amusing. When he found that it was intended that my wife should act as coxswain of the *Maid of Kent* he was much surprised and rather inclined to object. "You see," he exclaimed good-humouredly, "if I lose, my Sydney friends may sneer, 'What, beaten by a woman!' whilst if I win, they may say similarly, 'Oh, it was only against a woman!' But I think this feeling disappeared when he learned a little more about Mrs. Wyllie's sailing capacities.

"They want us to go out to Sydney and race there. As you say, Sydney Harbour is a yachtsman's Paradise, and I should much like to see it. But I am afraid the visit will take out too large a slice from one's year, and so, on the whole, I think it will be time enough to undertake it when the Australians have won the shield from us, and it becomes necessary to go and fetch it back again."

When at "the dock" I was much impressed by the sea-painter's enthusiasm for yachting. Beside the *Maid of Kent* there were at least half a dozen craft in and about the boathouse which Mr. Wyllie had designed and built during the last few years for racing purposes. Some had been very successful, others had been brilliant failures; but one and all were now useless for prize-winning, and two or three had been turned over to Mr. Wyllie's boys, who inherit all their father's love of the sea.

"The life of a racing yacht," said Mr. Wyllie to me, *àpropos* of these relics of past seasons, "is scarcely as long as that of a race-



REARING THE LION'S WHELPS.
From the picture by W. L. Wyllie, A.R.A.

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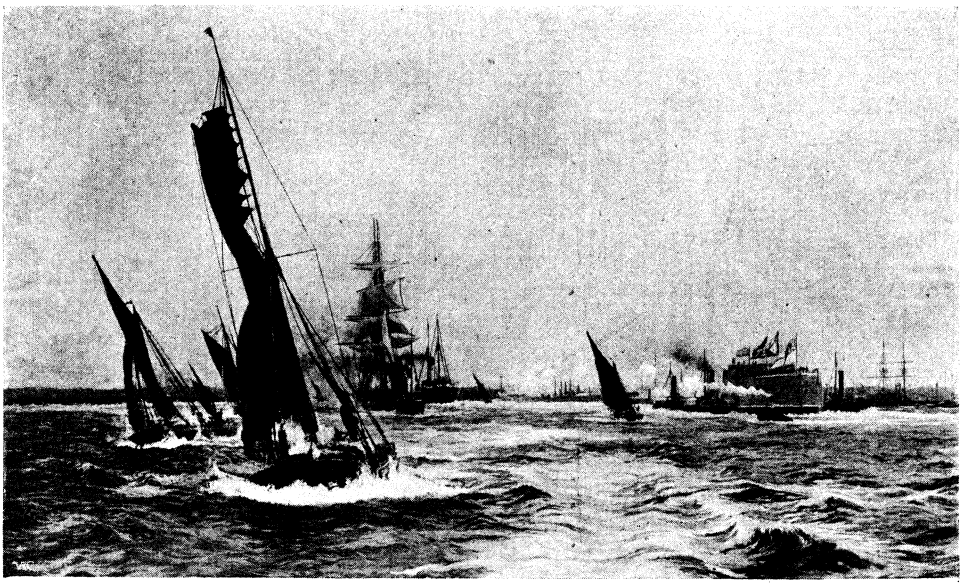

OUR RIVER.
From the picture by W. L. Wyllie, A.R.A.

horse. The Y.R.A. is so continually altering the rules that your boat soon becomes obsolete. As soon as a yacht of a particular design becomes successful, it would seem as though new restrictions were at once imposed to stop her victorious career."

Mr. Wyllie's recreation thus blends itself with his work. He would probably never have painted such exceedingly fine portraits of yachts if he had not given so much of his soul to yachting. A strange coincidence, by the way, attached itself to one of the finest of these subjects of his brush—the Prince of Wales's *Britannia*. The Queen and the Princess of Wales wished to give a birthday present to the Prince, and, unknown to each other, both commissioned Mr. Wyllie to make an oil painting of the *Britannia* with this object in view.

Only yachting men, I suppose, can fully understand Mr. Wyllie's affection for a yacht. Steamships, on the other hand, he likes best at a distance—for one thing, he is sometimes seasick on board of them, his original studies of the Eddystone Lighthouse, for instance, being made on a tug whilst he was suffering agonies from *mal de mer*. Nevertheless, Mr. Wyllie seems to have an intimate knowledge of the internal economy of modern steamships, having had at least two important voyages on "liners"—once to the West Indies on the *Garonne*, and again to the Baltic as one of the company with Mr. Gladstone on the *Tantallon Castle*. And he has certainly painted these monsters of the ocean with a realism only less vivid than that by which he can cause a yacht race to live again before our eyes.

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WHOSE THE VOICE

Playing on a hidden lute
Follow, Follow!
Who is this o'er hill and dale
Or secret hollow
(All else mute)
Draws the heart by night
and day
Ever pouring, never storing,
Melody so keen and fleet?

Swallow, Bird of Springtide
stay
Pass not yonder,
Say if this be youth's own echo
Let us wander
(While we may)
To it's measure wild and tuneful
Fairy singing, elfin ringing
Never was so madly sweet!

BY K·DE MATTOS

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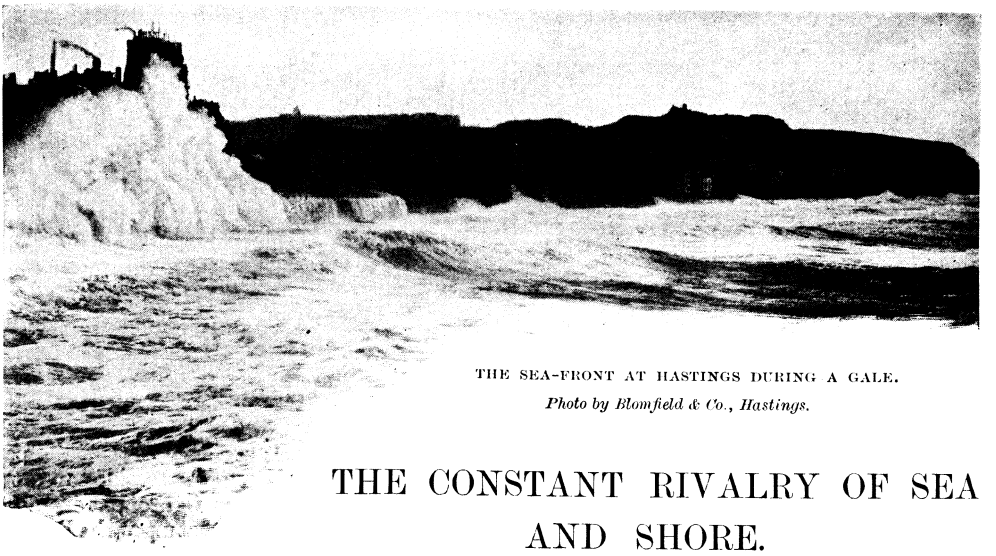


THE SEA-FRONT AT HASTINGS DURING A GALE.
Photo by Blomfield & Co., Hastings.

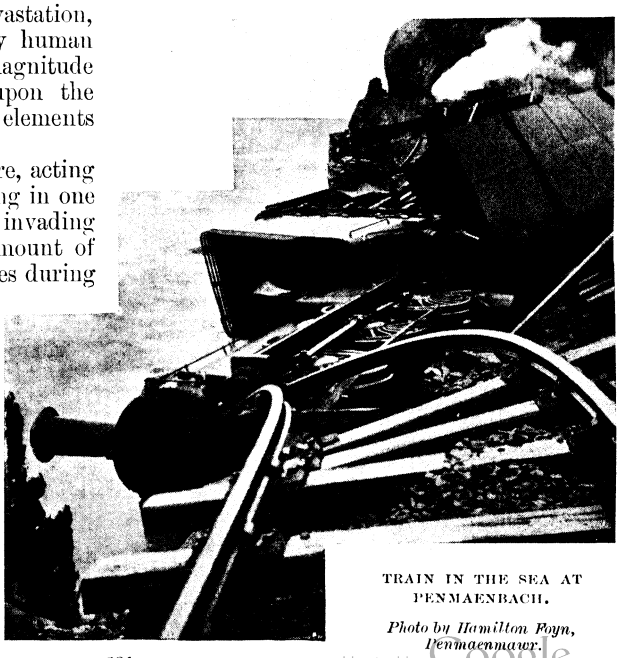
THE CONSTANT RIVALRY OF SEA AND SHORE.

By Frederick A. Talbot.

WHEN the peace of Europe has been rent asunder by the horrors of war, every Britisher has congratulated himself upon the fact that his native land has "water all round it," thus precluding any possibility of his being embroiled in hostilities unless his country's honour be at stake. But every blessing has its drawbacks; and there are times when the inhabitants of our sea-coast towns may almost regret that they do not belong to some nation of landlubbers, for the devastation, desolation, and damage caused by human strife are not to be compared in magnitude with that wreaked at intervals upon the unoffending land by the two fierce elements of sea and wind.

These two giant forces of Nature, acting in concert, are capable of destroying in one single night what it would take an invading army a week to demolish. The amount of damage caused by these two agencies during each year runs into many thousands of pounds, while the death-roll counts the victims for a like period by hundreds.

At certain points along our coast the elements appear to wage their war with especial fury. At the picturesque little Kentish town of Sandgate, near Folkestone, for instance, the battle royal between the sea and the civil engineers is magnificent. Scarcely a gale of any severity assails these shores without leaving its mark on Sandgate. Time after time the sea has effected a foothold here by tearing away the sea-wall, but it has been driven back successfully every time and the damage repaired. During the awful gales of a few months ago there was torn in this wall a breach measuring about two hundred feet in length and forty feet in width. The sea-road was all but washed away, and the gas-pipes and water-mains of



TRAIN IN THE SEA AT PENMAENBACH.
Photo by Hamilton Foyn, Penmaenmawr.

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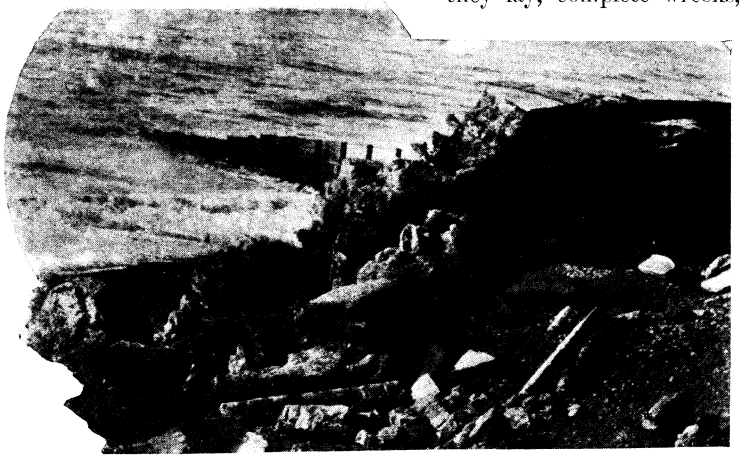
were caught up by the waves and dashed on to the beach some 600 yards west of the harbour, where they lay, complete wrecks, above high-water mark. The remaining four vessels were thrown upon the rocks and soon went to pieces. Fortunately, no lives were lost, for the crews were rescued, though with great difficulty, from their precarious position.

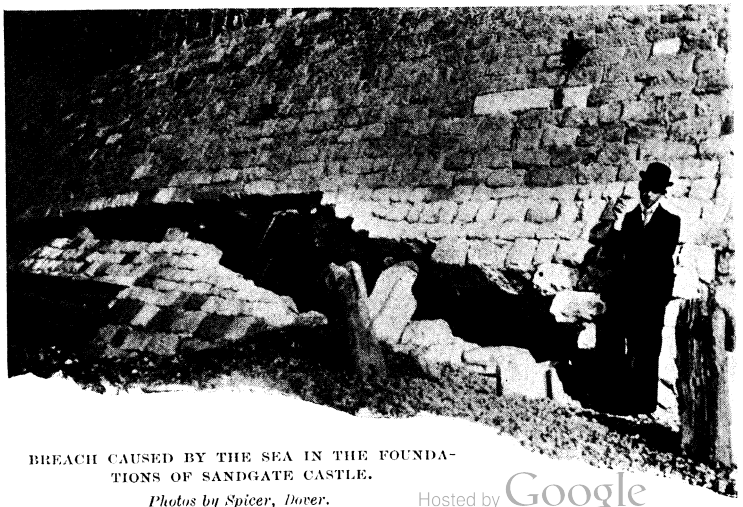


A GAP TORN IN THE SEA-WALL, SANDGATE.

December 4th, 1896, is a red letter day in the annals of the popular seaside resort of Brighton, for during that night the Psalmist's description of the waves of the sea as mighty and horrible in their rage was realised in a gale almost unparalleled on this part of the coast. The picturesque and historic Chain Pier, which for seventy years had been the *rendezvous* of fashion in London-by-the-Sea, was completely swept into the Channel, the electric railway running along the coast was washed away in many places, and the sea-going car, one of the curiosities of Brighton, was broken away from its moorings and had become a total wreck. In the morning the beach presented a strange spectacle of ruin. The huge baulks of timber with which the Chain Pier had been constructed lay strewn upon the beach. Several of them had been caught up by the infuriated waves and dashed with irresistible force against the iron foundation pillars of the town were stripped of all their earthy covering, and left as exposed as if they had always been laid above ground instead of some feet below.

The famous old castle—erected in the time of Henry VIII.—standing on the shore has borne its share of the force of the sea, for a tremendous breach has been made in the foundations of the historic old pile. In our illustration may be seen the huge baulks of timber which have been utilised to shore up the foundations.

The fishermen's boats at West Wemyss, on the Firth of Forth, experienced very rough usage from a terrible equinoctial gale on October 18th of last year. When the storm arose, seven vessels, ranging from two hundred to three hundred tons, were lying moored behind the breakwater for shelter, the little village harbour being so full that it was unable to accommodate them. While the gale was at its height the breakwater suddenly gave way, and one of the vessels broke from her moorings and ran amuck among the other six boats, with the result that they were all torn from their moorings in a very few minutes. Being absolutely helpless, three



BREACH CAUSED BY THE SEA IN THE FOUNDATIONS OF SANDGATE CASTLE.

Photos by Spicer, Dover.

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the West Pier, with the result that the pillars, not being constructed with a view to resisting such violent buffeting, had speedily collapsed, bringing down a large portion of the pier-deck into the sea. Altogether, damage to the extent of nearly £10,000 was inflicted upon the sea-front of Brighton in that one night.

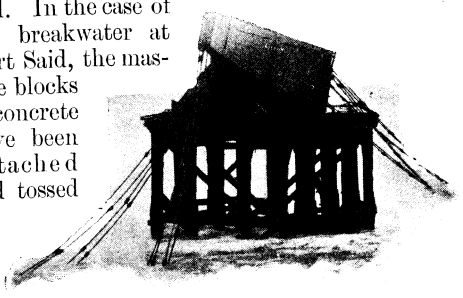
A great deal of inconvenience was caused last December through

THE OLD CHAIN PIER AT BRIGHTON AS IT WAS ON DECEMBER 4, 1896—

the cross-Channel mail-boats not being able to enter Dover Harbour during the south-westerly gales, owing to the violent swirling of the waters at the entrance to the Harbour. On this occasion, it will be remembered, the angry waves, dashing against the new pier, which projected beyond the Admiralty Pier, were hurled back seething and bubbling like an immense whirlpool. Had any vessel attempted to pass through those surging waters during the height of the gale it would assuredly have been completely wrecked.

Upon the coast of East Anglia the sea has made extensive incursions. Villages that were once many miles inland are being drawn perilously near the waves, and seem likely in the near future to follow the way that many others have already gone. At Sidestrand, near Cromer, the village church once stood high upon the cliffs, but the corrosion of the latter has been so great under the influence of the sea that in 1881 it was deemed advisable to remove the building further inland. It was accordingly dismantled, with the exception of the battlemented tower, which was left untouched, by command of the Master of Trinity House, to serve as a well-known landmark for mariners.

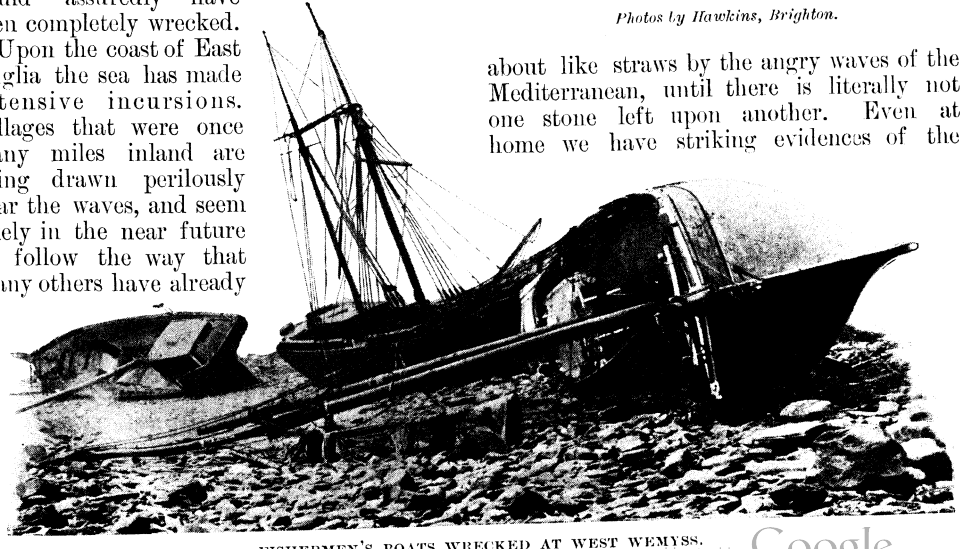
But the sea's most determined efforts have been directed against those very structures raised by man to resist its depredations — piers and breakwaters. In many parts of the world may be seen queer masses of detached masonry, which at one time were magnificent structures, but have been completely wrecked by the ocean god. In the case of the breakwater at Port Said, the massive blocks of concrete have been detached and tossed



—AND ALL THAT WAS LEFT OF IT THE NEXT MORNING.

Photos by Hawkins, Brighton.

about like straws by the angry waves of the Mediterranean, until there is literally not one stone left upon another. Even at home we have striking evidences of the



FISHERMEN'S BOATS WRECKED AT WEST WEMYSS.

Photo by J. P. Main, Kirkcaldy, N.B.

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ravages of the sea in this direction. At Alderney, in the Channel Islands, the Admiralty began to build a breakwater with the view of making a harbour of refuge for the English Fleet, but the south-westerly gales completely washed away the outer extremity of the pier. Despairing in their efforts to conquer the sea, the authorities finally abandoned the projected work. About a million of public money was practically wasted in this enterprise, for the abandoned works have never been of any use, except to the local small craft.

The fierce gales which raged with almost unparalleled fury during the early part of this year inflicted enormous damage on various parts of our coasts. At Penmaenbach the Chester and Holyhead Railway runs along the sea-shore upon a walled-in embankment, twenty-five feet high, the wall at the base measuring about two feet in thickness. On the night of Thursday, January 12th, there was an exceptionally high tide, and a tremendous sea pounded against the wall until a portion of the masonry, about one hundred yards in extent, together with the embankment, was swept into the sea, leaving the railway metals suspended in the air. A platelayer who was near the spot, seeing the metals flooded, concluded that some accident had taken place, and by the aid of his red lamp endeavoured to arrest a goods train that was approaching. His warning, however, came too late, and the train plunged into the sea. The engine turned over completely on its side and several of the trucks were smashed to pieces. When the tide receded the engine was found on the beach, as shown in our illustration, covered with *débris* and shingle. Only a quarter of an hour before the accident a passenger train had passed safely over the spot. Had the unfortunate freight train been a passenger one, or had the passenger train been a few minutes late, the disaster would have been far more awful and the loss of life enormous. As it was, the driver and firemen, who stuck to the engine, were swept away and drowned.

The picturesque little seaside resort of Herne Bay, on the north coast of Kent, suffered very severely from the attacking waves a year or two ago. Herne Bay, in common with the majority of seaside resorts, possesses a fine marine parade, flanked on one side with tastefully laid-out gardens. During a gale the whole of the marine parade was destroyed, the asphalt paving being ruthlessly torn up and the whole promenade reduced to switchback formation, while the gardens were entirely obliterated, being nothing else but a pebbly and *débris*-covered waste. Several of the streets were flooded to such a depth as to admit of the passage of boats, and for the nonce Herne Bay was converted into a veritable Venice.

THE SEA'S ATTACK ON THE MARINE PARADE, HASTINGS.
Photo by Blomfield & Co., Hastings.

It does not want a very heavy sea at Hastings to transform the front into a very impressive spectacle. The waves thunder heavily against the sea-wall, sending a tower-

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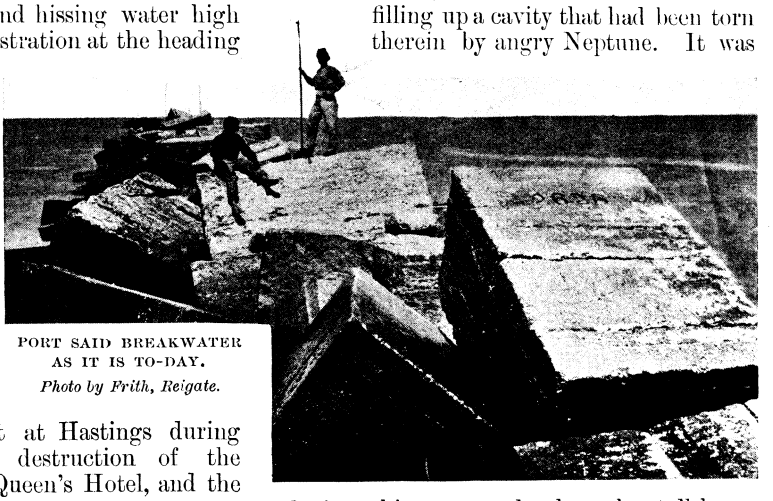
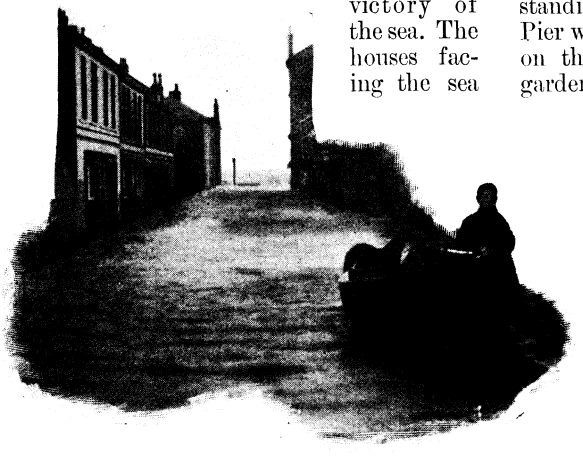
ing column of spray and hissing water high into the air. Our illustration at the heading of this article is a common sight during a gale. This huge sheet of water dashed into the air to a height almost sufficient to hide the Palace Hotel, which stands immediately behind, until only the chimney-pots of that edifice remained visible. Our other illustration of the sea-front at Hastings during a gale pictures the destruction of the promenade near the Queen's Hotel, and the temporary victory of the sea. The houses facing the sea always experience hard times during a gale, windows being broken by the pebbles that are cast into the air, and the rooms flooded and furniture spoiled through the invasion of the waves. During the recent gales the parade suffered great damage from the sea, huge holes being torn in the sea-front. On one occasion, after the tide had ebbed, three hundred tons of material were utilised for filling up a cavity that had been torn therein by angry Neptune. It was during this same gale that the toll-house standing at the entrance to St. Leonards Pier was demolished, while the carriage drive on the front was also destroyed, and many gardens in the vicinity were flooded to a great depth. Heavy blocks of masonry were dislodged, iron rails were twisted into fantastic shapes, and tons of pebbles littered the promenade.



PORT SAID BREAKWATER AS IT IS TO-DAY.
Photo by Frith, Reigate.



BOAT SAILING UP MARKET STREET AFTER THE GALE AT HERNE BAY.

In the gales of last January the tide at Rhyl on one occasion was driven up to the extraordinary height of twenty-four feet, carrying away all the coast defences. The new promenade at Colwyn Bay was flooded and many of the glass shelters were destroyed. Large portions of the marine promenade at Peel, in the Isle of Man, were carried away by the sea. Last year the jetty at Cromer shared the same fate, while a curious catastrophe also happened a few months ago, during a storm at Dieppe, when a vessel was driven by the sea into the wooden pier, cutting it completely in two.

THE SEA-FRONT AT HERNE BAY—DESTROYED IN ONE NIGHT.
Photos by Craik, Canterbury.

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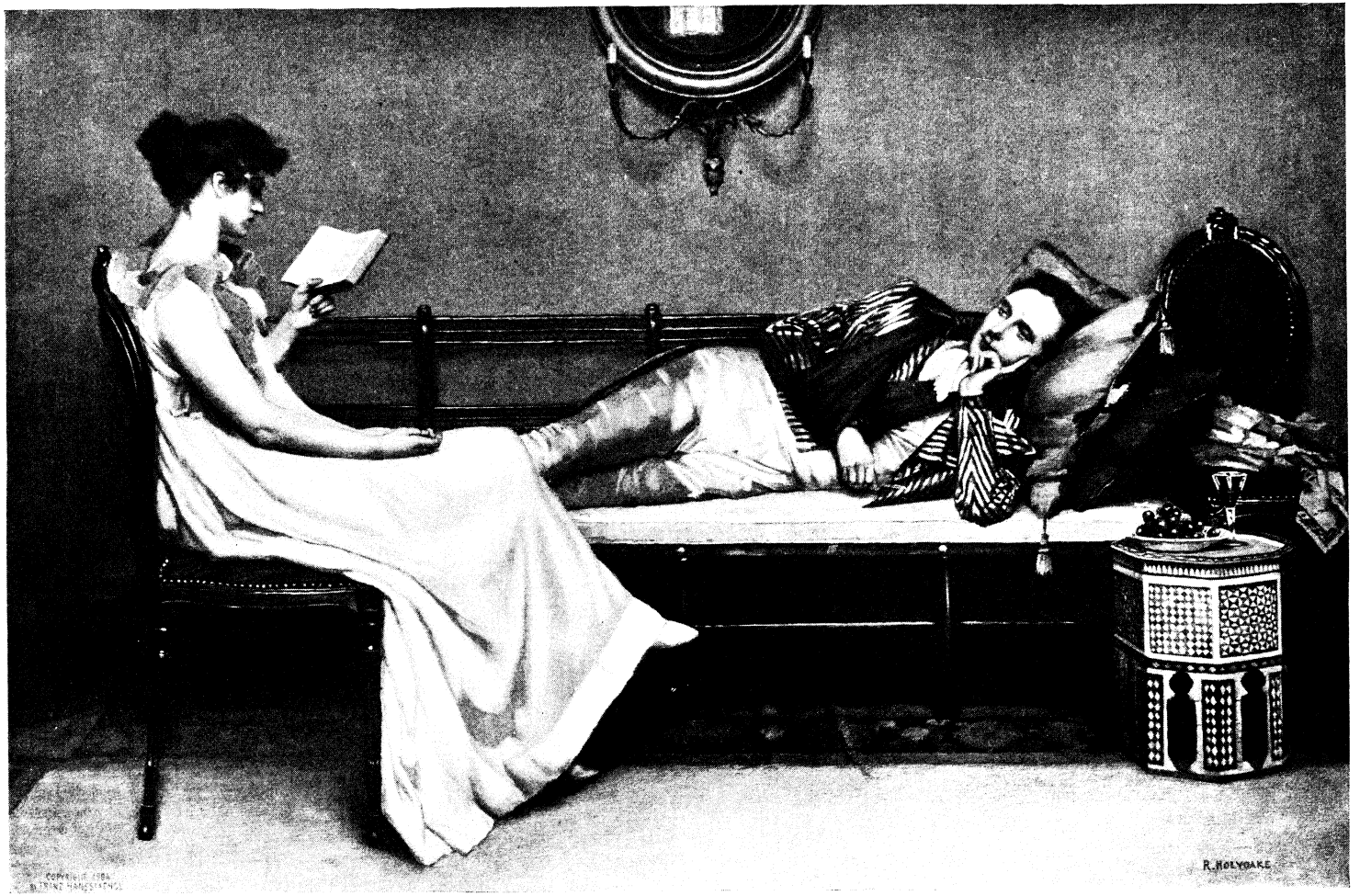

Copyright, 1891, *by Franz Hanfstaengl.*]

After the Duel.

FROM THE PICTURE BY R. HOLYOAKE.

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STORIES OF THE GOLD STAR LINE.

By L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace.

Illustrated by Adolf Thiede.

No. VI.—THE SACRED CHANK.

F all the men I ever met in my long cosmopolitan acquaintance, Michael Quentin was the one who for many years puzzled me most. He was a middle-aged man, interesting to talk to, and extremely well informed. He had a high forehead and a somewhat long and narrow face, his eyes were watchful and keen, with a dare-devil gleam in them at times, but more often they wore an indolent and even sleepy expression. He was a man possessed of much tact, and it was evidently his *rôle* to do kindnesses and make friends. In consequence, he was popular, and most people spoke of him as a right good fellow. He and I had been many voyages together in the *North Star*, and I never knew whether I was glad or sorry to see his name on our passenger list. The man was a constant puzzle to me, repelling and attracting me alternately. About himself he was singularly reserved. He had constant business in Colombo, and occasionally he went with us as far as Sydney, but he spoke little or nothing about why he took these voyages or visited these distant lands. On one occasion, it is true, he told me that he was a confidential agent of many of the largest European dealers in Oriental treasures—as he spoke he led the way to his cabin, and we spent an interesting hour examining his spoils and curios.

Amongst these were to be seen ivory carvings, precious stones, rare coins, odd musical instruments, and even weapons of war for savage tribes.

"Do you spend all your time over this kind of thing?" I could not help asking.

"Oh, I have many strings to my bow," was his ambiguous answer, and glancing up I caught an expression in his eyes which for the moment startled me. There was a keen and almost bloodthirsty gleam in them. I decided on that occasion that I did not like Quentin, but the next time I had an opportunity of talking with him his fascination drew me once more, and often when he was not on board I found myself thinking of him.

It was late in the autumn of 1897 that I was destined to lift the veil from this curious personality and to discover the man as he really was. The circumstances which led me to a ghastly conclusion began in an apparently ordinary way. I was spending a week in London before starting on one of my usual voyages to Sydney. One afternoon it occurred to me to call on an old friend. This friend was no less a person than Professor Birchell, the great conchologist. Some years ago I had done him a small service and he had often asked me to visit him. I knew that Birchell was a man of slender means, but he had a mania for collecting shells, and his collection was, he told me, one of the finest in Europe. I now drove to his house in a hansom, and on my inquiring if the Professor were in, the servant replied in the affirmative. I entered a dark and dingy hall, and the next moment was shown into a fair-sized room packed with small tables upon which stood various glass-covered specimen cases which I saw at a glance contained shells in countless variety.

Birchell was standing at the further end of the room, his black velvet skull cap on his head. He was engaged in earnest conversa-

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tion with someone. In the half light I did not see who it was, but as I approached nearer, to my astonishment I recognised Michael Quentin.

"Ah, Conway," said Birchell, when he caught sight of me, "I am glad to see you. So at long last you have redeemed your promise. Quentin, let me introduce you to my friend Mr. Conway."

"Conway and I have met before," said Quentin, with that almost furtive smile which distorted rather than improved his face. He held out his hand to me. Birchell glanced from one of us to the other.

"It is a bit of luck, your dropping in just now, Conway," he said. "Had I known your address I should have written to you before. It lies in your power to do me a service."

"You may be sure if I can I will," I answered.

"It is this. The *North Star* sails in a week's time, does she not?"

"Next Thursday," I answered.

"My granddaughter, Lucy Borrodale, is one of the passengers. She is travelling alone, and I have just asked Quentin to look after her a bit, which he gladly promises to do, but if the ship's purser will also show her attention I shall not have an anxious moment with regard to her."

"I will do what I can for Miss Borrodale," was my reply. "But is it possible, Quentin," I added, turning to the other man, "that you are coming out again to Sydney?"

"Only to Colombo, this time," was his reply; "I have some special business there which will not take very long. In all probability I shall be coming back with you on your return trip."

"And I earnestly hope that Lucy will also be coming back on the return trip," said the old man. "I can ill spare her, and the expense of keeping her at Colombo will be considerable. Well, it does cheer me to know that you will both look after her." He rubbed his hands as he spoke.

"Has Miss Borrodale friends in Colombo?" I asked after a pause.

"I can say 'Yes' and 'No' to that, Mr. Conway," was Birchell's reply. "Old friends of her mother's will in all probability give Lucy a welcome. She bears a letter of introduction to them, but she is going out on important business, very important business." He glanced, as he spoke, at Quentin. On Quentin's lips again broke that disagreeable smile, and the watchful gleam in his eyes was very marked.

"As Quentin knows all about it, and as you and he are friends, and as I want you to be good to my girl, I have a great mind to confide in you, Mr. Conway," said old Birchell. "Eh, Quentin? what do you think?"

Quentin did not speak at all for a moment, then he said slowly—

"I naturally can have no objection. Yes; I think, on the whole, it would be well that Mr. Conway should know."

"Sit down, then, Conway," said Birchell, "and I will explain matters as briefly as I can."

He cleared a chair of a glass case and I dropped into it. He himself took a chair opposite to me. Quentin remained standing.

"Did you ever, Conway," said my host, "happen to hear of the great Kalkana Chank?"

"The what?" I cried.

"The great Turbinella Fusus, with the dextral helix, that was stolen from the Temple at Kalkana in India fifteen years ago?"

"Never," I answered; "your words are so much Greek to me."

"Then I will explain. The Turbinella is a certain kind of shell found by divers off the Andaman Islands. All these shells have a certain twist or spiral, generally from left to right, called a sinistral helix. Large shells, however, with the dextral helix—that is, from right to left—are very rare and therefore very valuable. The few that have been found are used in Hindoo temples by the priests to offer up incense to their idols. They are considered sacred and are called Chanks. Now in the end of the last century an enormous Chank was found, nearly twelve inches long. This was sold to the Nizam at Kalkana for half a lac of rupees—that is, five thousand pounds. Now to turn to the personal part of my narrative. I had one daughter—she was twice married. When very young she married a Mr. Harrison, a clerk in a City office, who died leaving her with one son, and a few years later she made a match which in point of position was considered good. Her husband was a Mr. Borrodale, who was at the time of the marriage English Resident at Kalkana. Immediately after the wedding he and she went out to Kalkana. There a daughter was born to them, the Lucy Borrodale who is to accompany you on your next voyage. My daughter inherited my mania for collecting shells. The shells you see around you have been largely collected by

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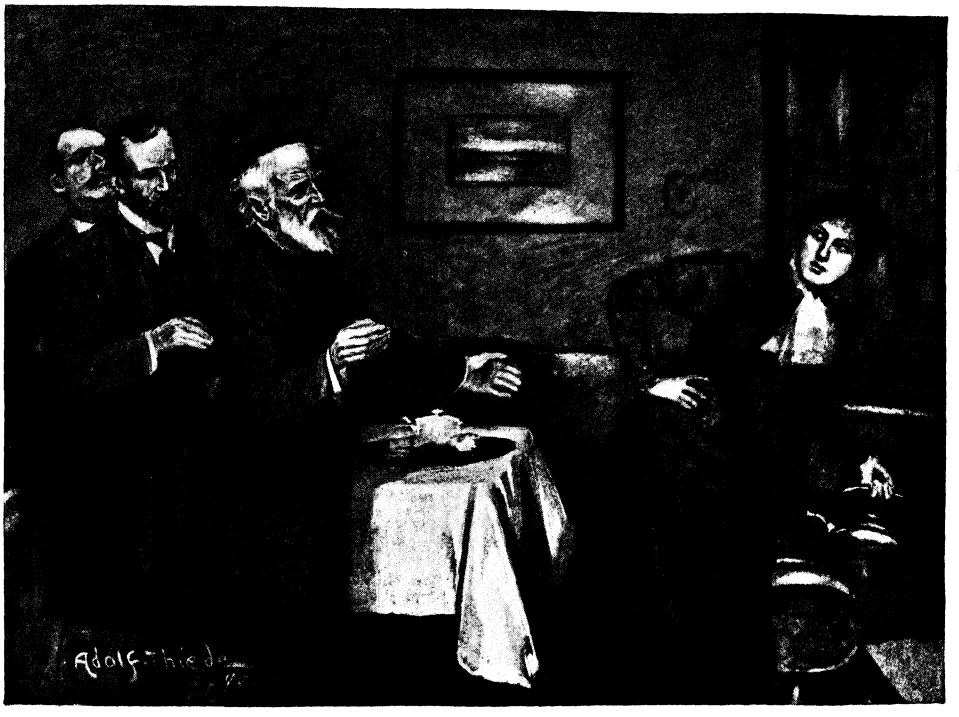
her. The great Chank was at that time in the Temple at Kalkana, and she wanted it, as it was the most unique specimen in the world. What the true story is has never been revealed, but the fact remains that the Chank disappeared. Suspicion pointed to my daughter, and the Nizam made a great fuss. Borrodale and his wife were obliged to leave Kalkana, and it was then proved that she had it in her possession. But before she arrived in England the shell was again stolen—by whom was never known.

"Very soon after the theft Borrodale, through a series of misadventures, lost his money and died a poor man. His wife did not long survive him, and Lucy came to live with me. In Borrodale's will the rupees which the Nizam was to restore if ever the Chank was returned have been left to Lucy and her heirs, but were Lucy to die without children the money will become the property of my daughter's eldest son Walter. Do you follow me?"

"Perfectly," I answered. "It is an extra-



"'Tea is not quite ready yet, grandfather,' she said."

From that day to this the mystery remains unexplained; but one thing is certain, the Chank was never brought back to Kalkana.

"Just at the time of the theft the Nizam badly wanted funds, and Borrodale was an extremely rich man. In order to avoid open scandal Borrodale lent him four lacs of rupees, the Nizam at the same time giving him his bond that whenever the shell was restored the money should be returned. Borrodale was forced to be satisfied with this bond, which was duly attested, and which the present Nizam has since declared he is willing to meet whenever the shell is brought back to his sacred Temple at Kalkana by one of the family.

ordinary story, but your statement is abundantly clear."

"Well, I have more to say. Pray listen. For years we have heard nothing of the Chank, but within the last fortnight an extraordinary thing has happened. I had a cablegram from a man at Colombo, a pearl dealer, a Parsee of high renown of the name of Bahajee. We have long corresponded, and I believe him, for an Oriental, to be a very straightforward, upright sort of man. From time to time he has sent me valuable shells and I have never known him play me false in any way. The cablegram which I received from him was to state that news of the shell had reached his ears, and he begged me not

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to lose an hour in coming to Colombo. I was much startled by this information and spoke of the matter to Lucy and Walter. Walter could not leave his employment in the City, and I am far too infirm to undertake such a long trip. Lucy, who is a very plucky girl, determined to take the matter into her own hands. I raised some of my last capital for the purpose, and she has taken her passage on board the *North Star* and goes out with you next Thursday. Should the Chank be recovered she will have a fortune of about thirty thousand pounds."

"By Jove!" I exclaimed, "it is a big business."

"It certainly is; but, nevertheless, I am nervous at Lucy leaving me. She is young and knows little of the world. If her mother's friends, the Challoners, are still at Colombo they will doubtless advise her to the best of their ability; but if not——"

"Have you cabled to find out if they are still there?" I asked.

"No, Mr. Conway," answered the old man; "cables are expensive things, and whether the Challoners are at Colombo or not Lucy must go. Failing them she will put up at the Oriental Hotel, and I have told her to take Bahajee into her confidence. It will undoubtedly be to his interest to recover the Chank for her, for I have promised him a large sum if he carries the matter satisfactorily through."

"Well, Mr. Birchell," I answered, "I am obliged for your confidence, and you may be quite sure I will do what I can for your granddaughter."

"And I also will do my best for Miss Borrodale," said Quentin.

The old collector gripped us both by the hands.

"I know you will," he answered; "I trust you both. This is a lucky call of yours, Conway, for I feel that with two such champions my grandchild will be safe. But come into the next room; I should like to introduce you to her."

Old Birchell preceded us to the door, threw it open, and took us into a smaller apartment at the other side of the hall. This room was also shabby and painfully bare. The curtains to the windows were faded nearly white, and the pattern had long been worn off the carpet, but all the same the room had a clean, habitable, and almost homely look.

As we entered, a thin girl in a shabby black frock was standing by the fire. She turned on hearing our footsteps and put down a brass kettle which she was holding in her hand.

"Tea is not quite ready yet, grandfather," she said, looking at the old man.

"All right, Lucy," he answered; "plenty of time. I have brought two visitors to see you—they will be your companions on the voyage. Let me introduce them—Mr. George Conway, purser on the *North Star*. Make great friends with Mr. Conway, Lucy; he is a capital fellow, I know him well; and"—here he glanced at Quentin—"Mr. Michael Quentin."

The wrinkled old face peered anxiously up into Quentin's as the quavering voice made this latter introduction.

"Both these gentlemen know all about your mission to Colombo, Lucy, so you can freely confide in them," said Birchell; "and now tea, my dear."

The girl, having briefly replied to her grandfather's introductions, returned to her office of tea-making. Her movements were quiet and deliberate, and I thought I noticed even then a watchful expression in her young face. Certainly care, and care alone, had brought that deep furrow between her pretty eyebrows, and there were lines round the somewhat sad mouth which seemed to me infinitely pathetic. Had she been well fed and well dressed she might have been a pretty girl, for her eyes were large and of a soft grey colour; but her face was too pale and her cheeks too hollow to make her in the least beautiful now.

She had just poured out three cups of tea when I heard the click in the hall door latch, and at the same time I noticed a rosy colour fly into Miss Borrodale's pale cheeks.

"What can be the matter now?" I thought, my interest keenly aroused.

"Ah!" said the old man, an annoyed expression visiting his face, "what brings Walter back so early?"

He had scarcely said the words before the door was noisily opened and a young man of about eight-and-twenty came in.

"Hullo!" he cried on catching sight of Quentin, "you here? This is luck. I thought you might be looking in this afternoon and I got off an hour earlier on purpose. A cup of tea, please, Lucy. How close the room is! Why do you keep such big fires?"

"Grandfather is cold, and the room must be kept warm on his account, Walter," said the girl in a grave tone.

"Walter," said the old man, "let me introduce you to my friend Mr. Conway."

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Harrison glanced at me, something like a scowl between his brows. He favoured me with a brief nod and then sat down on the sofa near Quentin. He began to talk to Quentin in a low tone, and the older man bent forward and replied in monosyllables. Walter Harrison's appearance by no means prepossessed me. He had loose, full lips and a shifty expression in his eyes. I thought that his whole appearance bore marks of a dissipated career.

Having drunk off my cup of tea I rose to depart.

"Trust me to look after your interests on board the *North Star*, Miss Borrodale," was my final remark. She looked me full in the face and a smile flitted across hers. She had a charming smile, sympathetic and tender.

"Ah, that's right, Conway," said the old man. "The knowledge that you will look after the child lifts a load from my mind. Thank you. God bless you!"

I left the house; but, during the remainder of that day, Lucy Borrodale's face, her old grandfather's anxiety, the peculiar expression which Michael Quentin had worn, returned to me again and again. How strange was the quest on which this young girl was going! What did it all mean? What was to be the upshot of this adventure? Above all, what sort of man was Harrison, and why did he hurry home in order to have a special word with Quentin? I had left Quentin behind when I took my departure.

After summing up all the different points of the story which I had just participated in, I came to the conclusion that I distrusted Walter Harrison and that I had seldom seen a more disagreeable face.

The next few days flew on the wings of time, and on Thursday morning Miss Borrodale came on board the *North Star*. Quentin had already arrived. When I came on deck I saw him talking to her. Old Birchell had not accompanied his granddaughter, but Harrison was seeing his sister off.

"Good luck to you, Lucy!" were his last words. "Get the Nizam to haul out the rupees and come back a rich woman." He gave her a leer, rather than a smile, and then called Quentin to accompany him to the gangway. They whispered together for a moment, the bell rang for all who were not passengers to return to the shore, and soon we were steaming away.

The voyage flew by without adventure, and Miss Borrodale and I became great friends. She soon lost her shyness with me and chatted eagerly about her grandfather and her home life.

"He is dreadfully poor, Mr. Conway," she said on one occasion. "He wants all the ordinary comforts of life. He is always denying himself for my sake. I have begged and implored of him many times to let me earn money, but he won't hear of it. He keeps on denying himself and selling his valuable shells from time to time. I know, as a matter of fact, that he sold some most unique specimens in order to provide money for this trip; but never mind, if I am successful he shall have them all back again. And I will be successful," she added, with an emphatic movement which sat prettily upon her. "I vow and declare that I won't come back to grandfather without the Chank."

"That is a somewhat rash vow to make," I answered. "Have you ever realised the difficulties of the quest on which you are going?"

"Oh, yes, but I also know that I have indomitable perseverance and determination, and that I do not think, brought face to face with danger, that I should know fear."

"I am glad to hear it," I answered; "such a spirit ought to lead to success. When you recover the Chank you will be a rich woman."

"Yes," she answered; "and I repeat again that I won't come back to grandfather without it."

Although Miss Borrodale made friends with me, I observed that she avoided Quentin. He was inclined to make himself agreeable to her, but his smartest anecdotes and his raciest stories never provoked a smile on her grave face. When he approached she invariably went away, not being exactly rude to him, but always very cold and distant. One day, as we were approaching Colombo, he spoke to me about it.

"What is the matter with Miss Borrodale?" he said; "anyone would think that she distrusted me."

"That surely is impossible," I answered; "she scarcely knows you."

"That is quite true; she does not know me at all," answered Quentin; "but, all the same, she may need my help at Colombo, and it is silly of her to be so cold and distant."

I myself began also to think that Miss Borrodale was scarcely acting wisely, and the day before we reached Colombo I spoke to her on the subject.

"Why do you always avoid Quentin?" I asked.

She started as I spoke, then said quietly—

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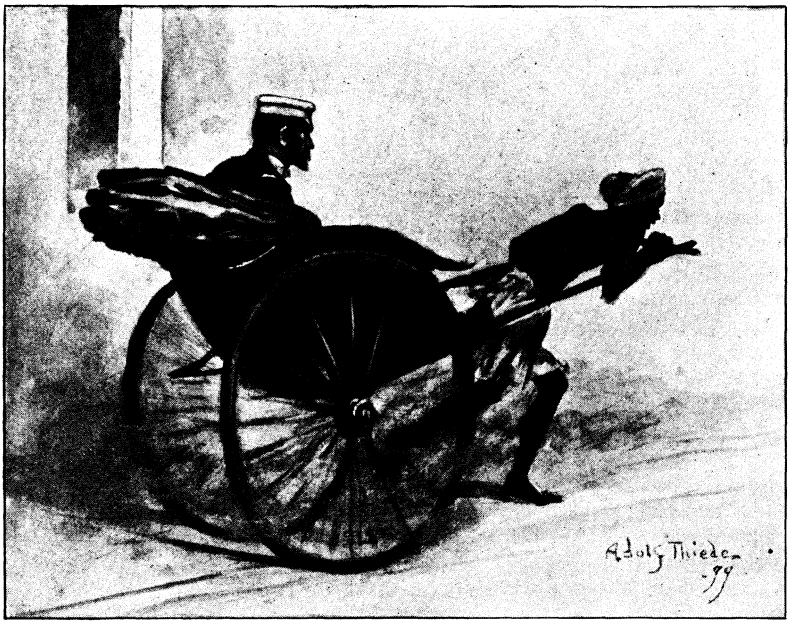
"Because I heartily distrust him."

"But have you any reason for this remarkable avowal?" I continued.

"Partly a woman's intuition," was her reply, "and partly because he is a great friend of my stepbrother, Walter Harrison."

"Ah! you have never spoken of your brother," I said.

"My stepbrother, Mr. Conway." She hesitated, then continued in a low voice, "It is dreadful to speak against one's own flesh and blood, but Walter has been the curse of my grandfather's life and mine. He is a bad man. I don't know how my mother came by such a son; but ah! she did wrong herself, dreadfully wrong, when she stole the Chank. Why did she do it? Even if we never recover the rupees, that Chank ought to be restored to the Nizam; it seems the only way of retrieving my mother's character. But to return to Walter—he is unprincipled, he drinks, he is a bad man, I hate and fear him."



"I leapt into the jinrickshaw and sped rapidly into the town."

"This is terrible," I said.

"Listen, Mr. Conway," continued the girl. She laid her hand for a moment on my arm. "If the Chank is recovered, and if the Nizam is true to his bond, and if I die, Walter will come in for the money, thirty thousand pounds. Mr. Quentin knows the whole story of the Chank—Walter and Mr. Quentin have been together more or less since that day a week before we sailed. I fear I don't know what, but of one thing I am determined, I will never give any confidences to Michael Quentin."

"Well, I am certain you exaggerate matters," I answered. "It seems a pity that you should not avail yourself of Mr. Quentin's services. He knows Colombo well. If your friends are there, well and good; but suppose they are not? You will then be thrown solely and entirely on your own resources."

"No, my grandfather's old friend Bahajee, the Parsee dealer, will help me. Anyhow, Mr. Conway, I repeat what I have just said—I will never confide in Mr. Quentin."

We arrived at Colombo, and there, to my distress and Miss Borrodale's own consternation, found that the Challoners had gone up country six months ago.

"What is to be done?" I said to her. At her request I had come on shore and we were having tiffin together at the Oriental Hotel.

"I shall stay here," was her quiet reply; "I shall be quite safe. Bahajee will advise me, and I shall be busy taking steps to recover the Chank."

"All the same, I don't like leaving you in Colombo alone," I said.

"Oh, I shall be all right," she answered, "and too busy even to have time for fear. What could harm me?"

"If I could only feel that you and Quentin were friends, and that I left you more or less in his hands——" I replied.

"Then I am very glad you are not leaving me in his hands, Mr. Conway, for then I might have real cause for alarm."

"Well," I said, as I took her hand, "I am sorry I must go now; but send me a letter—will you?—to Batavia; I shall pick it up on my return voyage. Who knows?—by then you may have been successful; but, whatever

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happens, write to me. I shall come to see you here the moment we touch Colombo again."

She thanked me heartily for this, promised to do what I wished, and I left her. She came to the door of the big hotel to see me off, and smiled as I went rapidly down the street. To all appearance she looked in the best of spirits, but I greatly disliked leaving her—her quest was a dangerous one, and she might be surrounded by those who would rob her of her rights. Still, she was a brave and sensible girl, and knew well how to take care of herself, and I thought that even in the event of an emergency she would know how to act.

The ship sailed from Colombo and we went south. We reached Sydney in good time, and on our return voyage I looked anxiously forward to our arrival at Batavia and to the letter which I expected to find there. I called immediately at our agents' office and asked if there were any letters for me. One was placed in my hands. It was from Miss Borrodale. I tore it open and read the following contents—

"DEAR MR. CONWAY,—Things are going well at last, and I hope by the time you arrive here I shall have been successful. Mr. Bahajee, my grandfather's old agent, has proved very kind and is moving heaven and earth to help me in my search. The cue about which he cabled to grandfather came, unfortunately, to nothing, and beyond the fact that the Chank has lately been in Colombo he had at first nothing to tell me definitely; but within the last few days a most important new development has taken place. Bahajee has told me that he believes he is at last really on the track. It seems that the shell was traced to the possession of an old merchant here, an American who lived alone and has lately died. Fearing that the emissaries of the Nizam would find and steal the Chank, he buried it in some place in the Cinnamon Gardens—at least, that is the story. The secret of its hiding-place has, to all appearance, died with the old merchant; but a Cingalese, a friend of Bahajee's, told him only yesterday that the merchant had a mania on the subject, and was constantly repeating the secret of the hiding-place to himself. He lived alone, with only one companion, a large grey parrot. The Cingalese swears that the bird picked up the words of his master's secret and used to repeat them at intervals, amusing the old man by dinning the secret into his ears at all sorts of unexpected moments; but since the merchant's death the bird has not once uttered the words, although the Cingalese is persuaded that they form part of his vocabulary. Bahajee believes that some means can be taken to induce the bird to repeat the secret, and is now arranging that he and I shall go the old merchant's house for the purpose. This is a little difficult to manage, as the relations of the old man guard his property day and night, and are naturally anxious to discover the hiding-place of the Chank for themselves, as it is worth money to anyone who finds it. They therefore watch the bird day and night, fearing to leave it a moment with strangers, and trusting to induce it to reveal its secret. Bahajee intends to outwit or to buy it off these people. What his exact mode of action is I cannot tell you, for I do not quite know; but he has every hope that he will succeed, and whatever he wishes me to do I intend to undertake. You know how I vowed that I would not return to grandfather without the Chank or the rupees, and I would go far now to keep that promise which I made to my own mind. By the time you reach Colombo I hope that success will have crowned our efforts. In the meantime wish me luck. Yours sincerely,

"LUCY BORRODALE.

"P.S.—Mr. Quentin is still in Colombo; I met him only yesterday. He asked me how I was progressing with my search, but I told him nothing. I dislike and distrust him more than ever."

I read Miss Borrodale's letter over more than once. There was something about its contents that I did not like. The story of the parrot seemed to me queer and unlikely, and a horrible suspicion assailed me that Lucy was being led into some trap. The more I thought over matters the more uncomfortable did I grow. But there was nothing for it but to wait until I arrived in Colombo again.

At last, just at sunset one glorious evening, we reached Ceylon. I had told the skipper that I intended going immediately on shore, as I had important business to transact. He raised no objection, and I had scarcely set foot on the landing-stage before a Cingalese boy came up and handed me a note.

"Mr. Conway, sahib, from Mr. Bahajee. Jinrickshaw ready here for you, sir," he said.

I read the contents of the note quickly.

"Come to my house at once," wrote Bahajee; "there is trouble."

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My heart sank and a vague fear clutched at it. I leapt into the jinrickshaw, and the runner darted out from among the carriages and sped rapidly into the town. In ten minutes I had arrived at the Parsee's house, and one of the servants received me. He led me at once through the verandah into a room almost dark, except for a small lamp which stood on a table. The dim light revealed a low couch upon which lay Bahajee. I had seen him last just before we started for Colombo, and was now startled at the change in his appearance. The dusky skin was drawn tightly over his emaciated face, the cheekbones had started into undue prominence, and the glassy, black eyes shone like lamps.

The moment he saw me he made an effort to rise, but fell back again with a cry.

"You have come, Mr. Conway," he said; "stoop down, I have something to tell you."

I bent down over his couch.

"Yes, Bahajee," I said; "speak. If you have anything to say, tell it quickly."

His eyes rolled anxiously round the apartment.

"There is no one present," I said; "say what you have to say at once."

"I will," he answered; "but there is a cloud over me—I am near death. My brain cannot think. Yes, now I remember—it is the English mees—she is in danger."

"What? How? What do you mean?" I interrupted.

"There is a plot to kill her," continued the old man. "I blame myself. I was tempted, and I helped to throw dust in her eyes. You may be in time to save her."

"You must tell me more, Bahajee, and quickly," I said. "Do you mean to imply that Miss Borrodale's life is in danger—in danger now?"

"Yes, now," he answered, "now. Perhaps this very minute. I counted the days until you returned. I thought your ship would be due to-night. I sent my messenger to ask you to come here. The English mees is good—she saved my little grandson, Bahajee the younger. Three days ago the child sickened with fever, and I thought him dying, but the young English mees came and nursed him all night; she saved his life. Then I vowed she should not be a victim. I cannot tell you much more; only go and save her."

"And you were in this plot?" I cried.

"I was bribed," he answered feebly, and beginning to whimper; "yes, bribed—a large sum. But I am dying now; he cannot hurt me."

"Whom do you mean?"

"I name no names," said the old Parsee; "but—but the English mees will never get the sacred Chank—never—and *her life is in danger*. Go to the house with the parrot. The parrot knows nothing, it is all a plot to throw dust in her eyes. Go at once"

"But where is the house?" I asked, my anxiety and perplexity rising to fever heat; "tell me at once."

The dying man gave a weird and crooked smile.

"The jinrickshaw boy will tell you; he will take you there. Say Bahajee bids—he will do my bidding. There is a revolver on that table—put it in your pocket. Go; you may be in time."

Without another word I seized the revolver and left him. His eyes, with that queer, dying gleam in them, followed me to the door of the room. I closed it behind me, rushed out, jumped into the jinrickshaw, and told the boy to take me to the house where the grey parrot was.

The lad started running as fast as ever he could. We seemed to fly through the streets. I soon saw that he was taking me in the direction of the native quarter. Presently we entered a road lined with palms; we alighted under the shadow of one, and, the boy still accompanying me, we made our way rapidly up a short entrance drive to what looked like a large private mansion. Without uttering a word the boy knocked on the front door. It was immediately opened by a wizened-faced old Cingalese woman. She had toothless gums, and looked at us both with apprehension, but before she could bar the way I had entered.

"I have reason to believe that the English lady Miss Borrodale is here," I said. "Take me to her immediately."

She smiled, shook her head, and pointed outside.

"No English mees here," she said.

"You lie, you old hag," I answered; "take me to her at once." As I spoke I took the revolver from my pocket. My action was significant, and the wretched creature fell back in terror against the wall.

"Tell her," I said, turning to the boy, "that unless she obeys and takes me to Miss Borrodale at once, I will shoot her."

The lad with a grimace translated my words into Cingalese. He evidently added to them, for the woman no longer resisted, but turning, led the way down a long corridor

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and, pointing solemnly to a closed door, disappeared down another passage to the left.

"You must come with me," I said to the boy, "and if necessary you must help me. I will guarantee that you do not suffer for your actions."

The lad looked up at me with sparkling, soft, dark eyes, and as I entered the room followed me without a word. He and I now found ourselves on the threshold of a large apartment. At my first glance it seemed to be empty; then I saw a sight which I shall never forget to my dying day. In the faint gleam of a distant shaded lamp I perceived the figure of Miss Borrodale. She was standing in a listening attitude close to a table upon which stood a large cage containing a handsome West African grey parrot with a beautiful crimson tail. The bird was lazily rubbing its beak against the wooden perch of its cage; now and then it fluttered its wings as if it meant to speak and then changed its mind. Crouching on his knees within a foot of the girl, and smoking an opium pipe, was a hideous-looking Cingalese—the fumes of the opium were entering the bird's cage.

Lucy Borrodale was standing at attention. She had not taken the slightest notice of my abrupt entrance, every faculty of her mind was intently occupied in watching the parrot. Would it reveal its secret, or would it remain obstinately silent?

I went quickly over to her and laid my hand on her shoulder.

"Miss Borrodale," I said, "I have come to fetch you. Thank God I am in time! you must come with me immediately."

"No, no," she said in a voice of distress; "why have you come to interrupt me? The parrot was just going to speak – I won't stir until it gives up its secret. Don't interrupt me, please; go, do go."

"'If you have anything to say, tell it quickly.'"

"You must come away at once," I said authoritatively; "the parrot knows no secret—it is all a blind – a blind; you must come away."

As I said the words the Cingalese rose, laid down his pipe, and approached my side. As he did so I saw him steal his hand into his belt, and in another instant his dagger would have been through my heart. But I was too quick for him. With a sudden movement I pinned his hands behind him and held him tight.

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"Go out of this, Miss Borrodale," I shouted. "Go at once; I will be with you when I have settled this chap."

Brave as she was, a frightened look came into her eyes.

"But I cannot leave you like this," she said.

"Go! go!" I shouted.

She saw by my manner that I meant what I said, and reluctantly left the room. The jinrickshaw boy was standing by the entrance.

"Take the lady straight back to the Oriental Hotel, and return for me," I said to him. He seized Lucy's hand and ran with her out of the room.

"Now, you old villain," I said, turning to the Cingalese, "what do you mean by this?"

"Let me go," he whimpered.

"Not until you go on your knees and confess. What were you doing with the English lady?"

"Nothing."

"I have a revolver with me and will shoot you dead on the spot if you do not confess immediately. If you tell me the truth I will spare your miserable life."

He looked me full in the face, saw that I was desperate, and went on his knees.

"I was paid to do it," he said. "She was meant to spend the night here. When the fumes of the opium made her sleepy I was to——" He made a significant gesture.

"And who put you up to this?" I said.

But before he could reply, almost before the words had passed my lips, there was a noise outside—it startled me, the Cingalese took advantage of the sudden loosening of my hands, made a deft movement, wrenched himself from my grasp, and fled from the room. Fortunately in his own terror he left the door open behind him. I went into the passage and the next instant had left the house. I went straight to the Oriental Hotel, where Miss Borrodale was. I found her in a state of extreme nervous tension.

"Why did you come?" she said; "why did you interrupt? I cannot imagine what this all means—the parrot would have told me his secret. He was fluttering his wings and going on just as he always did before he spoke. And Bahajee was ill and could not come with me, and I was too impatient to wait any longer. I wanted to secure the Chank and return home in the *North Star* with you. I insisted on going alone this evening to the house where the parrot was kept. Bahajee was queer and tried to prevent me, but I would not listen to him. I paid that old Cingalese to smoke the opium pipe as the merchant who died so often did. I hoped the fumes of the opium and the old associations would induce the parrot to tell his secret. He was getting accustomed to me, and he would assuredly have soon spoken; but now you have spoiled everything, Mr. Conway, and I cannot forgive you." The tears sprang to the angry girl's eyes.

"Listen to me," I said. "I went to seek you at the house with the parrot by Bahajee's desire."

"Bahajee's desire? What do you mean?"

"What I say. A letter from him was awaiting me when I landed this evening. The old man was dying and told me everything."

I then related the story which the dying Parsee had whispered in my ear.

"The parrot was a blind," I said in conclusion; "the whole scheme was concocted—by whom, God only knows! But one thing is certain, had I not appeared in time, you would never have left that place alive."

She turned very white. For a time she was silent, then she said gravely—

"And I lost my temper and did not believe in your kindness. Will you forgive me?"

"There is nothing I would not forgive now that your life is saved," was my answer. "I can tell you, Miss Borrodale, I went through an ugly hour this evening—I should not care to live through it again."

She was leaning up against the wall of the private sitting-room which she occupied, and I saw her hands tremble and a dimness pass over her eyes. After a pause she said, "What shall I do now?"

"There is but one thing to be done," I answered; "you must come back to England with me."

"What! without the Chank?"

"It is my belief that you will never now get the Chank. I fancy you are right about Quentin, and if anyone has got it he has."

"Then I return to England a failure?"

"At any rate, you come back. Had our voyage been delayed, had I not known . . . Miss Borrodale, I shudder even now to think what your fate might have been."

"I suppose I was mad to go," answered the poor girl; "but you can never realise what it all meant. Bahajee assured me that the parrot knew the secret, and would tell it if only we could devise some means of recalling the past to its memory. Bahajee thought of the opium pipe and everything

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"She was standing in a listening attitude close to a table."

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was arranged. He and I were to go to the house this evening. But two nights ago the old dealer's little grandson got ill. I don't believe Bahajee loves any other creature on earth, but he was nearly mad about the little one. I know something of illness and I nursed the child, and I believe, with God's help, restored his health. Then, yesterday morning, Bahajee himself had a queer attack, a stroke or something, and when I saw him this morning he was too ill to come, and I found to my amazement that he had changed his mind and did not wish me to go either. That I would not consent to. I wanted the Chank, it seemed the last chance of finding it, and I wanted to give my grandfather comforts during the rest of his life."

"It was natural that you should go," I said; "but now I must leave you for a short time—I will be back again before long."

I went straight to the old dealer's house. I was anxious to force Bahajee to reveal the name of the man who had attempted Miss Borrodale's life, but I was too late. I was greeted by the news that Bahajee had breathed his last half an hour ago. I went into the bedroom and saw him. The jinrickshaw boy was there, and the little grandson, Bahajee the younger, sat on the old man's bed. He was playing with a toy which the English miss had given him, and looked bright and well, in startling contrast to the dead face which appeared more ghastly than ever in its last sleep.

After paying the jinrickshaw boy handsomely I left the house and returned to the hotel.

"Now," I said to Miss Borrodale, "I want you to do something for me."

"What is that?"

"I want you to come with me on board the *North Star* to-night."

"To-night?" she said.

"Yes; we sail before noon to-morrow; but I cannot rest until you are safe out of this place. You have to do with desperate people, and the Chank is of extreme value. Come, you will not be long putting your things together. I have a carriage outside."

She glanced at me in hesitation, then said abruptly—

"I believe you are right."

In less than half an hour Miss Borrodale had packed her things and we were whirling through the streets. When I lay down in my own cabin that night I had the satisfaction of knowing that she was safe on board the *North Star*. I was too excited to sleep, and although the life of the young English girl was saved, an extraordinary and inexplicable depression still lay at my heart.

The next day, just before the ship sailed, Quentin came on board. I was standing not far from Miss Borrodale when he crossed the gangway. He looked up and saw us together. It needed but one glance into his face to know the truth. It turned an ugly grey, his lips trembled, he almost tottered, then, quickly recovering himself, he came forward.

"This is luck," he said. "I always felt you would return in the same boat with me, Miss Borrodale. How do you do? What about your search—have you been successful?"

She only replied to his words by the faintest inclination of her head. I glanced at her and saw that she was deadly pale.

"Miss Borrodale is not well," I said gravely.

My first inclination was to seize the man, shout his treachery into his ears, and ask the skipper to make him his prisoner and bring him safe to England; but on reflection I knew that I had no warrant for such a course, and the idea suddenly flashed through me that in all probability he had secured the Chank and was bringing it home. If so, it behoved me to be wary, for even yet Miss Borrodale might recover the treasure.

I went to my cabin and thought carefully over the position. We were already pursuing our homeward course. In a short time we would be back in England. Quentin had no idea that I suspected him. I resolved that, if possible, he should remain in ignorance of my true feelings. I went to see Miss Borrodale and told her what I wanted her to do.

"Stay in your cabin as much as possible," I said. "You hate the man, and I also thoroughly distrust him. There is no doubt he was at the bottom of the foul game to murder you which I was just in time to prevent But now our object is to secure the Chank, which I firmly believe he has in his luggage. He would rather drop it in the sea than that it should get into your hands; but if possible we will outwit him."

"What do you mean to do? Why cannot you accuse him boldly?" said the girl.

"Because I have not a scrap of evidence," was my answer, "and the strongest suspicion goes for nothing without evidence. I am nearly convinced that he has the Chank. It is evident that it was to be found in Colombo, and a girl like yourself cannot outwit a man of Quentin's calibre."

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She said nothing further, but a faint smile crossed her face. I went away to think out the problem of how I could possibly outwit Quentin. The man was clever; he had perfect control of himself, and bore, as far as I could tell, an excellent character; nevertheless, beyond doubt he was guilty, beyond doubt it had been at his instigation that the helpless girl, who was now accompanying us back to her native land, had been so nearly murdered. There was every reason to believe that the Chank was in his possession. How was it to pass into the hands of its rightful owner?

Suddenly, one evening, an idea struck me which seemed little short of an inspiration. If it succeeded it would be a certain way out of the difficulty By my scheme every piece of Quentin's luggage would be searched without his having the slightest suspicion of its being done with any but a natural object. Early on the voyage he had casually mentioned that he meant to disembark at Plymouth. As we drew near to Plymouth I went on deck, for I knew that I must act quickly when the moment came. We should stay there twenty-four hours before going on to London. As usual, Vernon, the harbour detective, came on board accompanied by another man. I went up to him at once.

"Look here," I said, "I want you to help me."

"Certainly, Mr. Conway," he replied.

"It is this," I continued. "I am not in a position to explain matters, but I want the luggage of every passenger who goes ashore to be searched at the Customs through and through."

"Contraband goods?" he queried.

"You may put that interpretation upon it if you like," was my reply; "but all I can say is this, that more important affairs depend on this matter than you can possibly guess. Can you help me? Can you drop a word to the officials?"

"I believe so," he answered slowly.

He went off and I told the skipper that I was going on shore in the tender with the other passengers, as I had some private business to attend to. As I went towards the gangway, the tender being alongside, Quentin came up, holding out his hand.

"Good-bye, old chap," he said. "Pray offer my adieux to Miss Borrodale. This has been a bad business; I hope she is not too bitterly disappointed."

"It is not good-bye, yet," I answered; "I am coming ashore with you."

"Really," he replied; "on business?" The slightest, almost imperceptible expression of fear flitted across his face.

"He turned round and seized me by the arm."

"Yes," I answered. "Come, let us go—the tender is ready."

He made no further remark. We reached the wharf in a few minutes and stood watching the passengers' luggage as it was being removed to the Customs shed.

"Here comes mine," said Quentin. "I must go and see after it—good-bye."

"I am in no hurry," I said; "I will come with you."

"Why?" he asked, suddenly turning round upon me. There was a ring of insolence in his tone which did not escape my ears, and I caught Vernon's eye, who was

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standing just behind me. My heart beat as without a word I followed him into the shed.

Quentin walked quickly up to where his luggage was piled on one of the long benches. An official came forward and I saw him dexterously slip a sovereign into the man's hand. The official flushed deeply as he caught sight of Vernon—he had evidently not seen him at first, and quickly handed the coin back to Quentin.

"I cannot take it, sir—it is against rules," he said in a low voice—then in a louder tone, "Have you anything to declare?"

"Yes," replied Quentin, laying his hand on a portmanteau, "there are two hundred cigars in that trunk."

The man unstrapped it and Quentin took the box out.

"There is nothing else," he continued. I glanced at his face. It was ashy white. I guessed by its expression that he knew I was watching him.

"We have orders to search all boxes, sir," said the man. "We suspect some lace, I think. Kindly unlock all your luggage."

Quentin glanced round. It was evident that all the boxes of the other passengers were being searched. There was no escape. In his eyes was the expression of a caged wild beast. Suddenly he turned round, seized me by the arm, and drew me aside. I felt his hand trembling.

"I want to speak to you for a moment," he said.

"What is it?" I asked.

"It is all up! My God! don't expose me. If you only knew! I was in terrible financial difficulties, and the temptation was too great, the bribe too big! I am ruined, utterly ruined!"

"Now, look here, Quentin," I said, "you have played as dastardly, as cowardly, as dark a trick as man could play, but it is not my business to bring you to justice. If I did, I believe I could prove——"

"Don't! don't!" he said. He was shaking so violently that he had to lean against the wall of the shed to steady himself. The passengers began to look round.

"Give me the shell," I said in a whisper, "and you can go to the devil; only never let me see your face again."

He remained silent for a moment, then went up to where the official was examining his box. No contraband goods were to be found there, but in one large box, carefully packed in cotton wool, was the sacred Chank. Quentin handed it to me without a word, and the next instant I saw him leave the shed.

"'And I owe it all to you!'"

* * *

What followed can be better imagined than described. I shall never forget Miss Borrodale's joy, nor the look of happiness on her young face. When last I heard of Birchell and his granddaughter they were people of means, and had moved into a large house, for the Chank had been returned to the Nizam, who had faithfully kept his bond and given back the rupees which Borrodale had lent his father. Miss Borrodale is therefore a rich woman, but Quentin has disappeared from England; and as to Walter Harrison, that unhappy youth has gone from bad to worse, and was arrested a few months ago on a charge of forgery. He is now serving his time in one of her Majesty's prisons. When I returned from my last voyage I went to see Miss Borrodale.

"And I owe it all to you!" she said on this occasion. "How can I thank you?"

I thought there was a way which I would tell her later on, but for the time I was silent.

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A BOUNDARY RIDER.
Photo by Wilson, Aberdeen.

IN THE BUSH.
Photo by Wilson, Aberdeen.

BUSH-LIFE IN AUSTRALIA.

By Anton Bertram.

Illustrated by J. Macfarlane.

WHEN a Colonial-born Briton comes "home" to the Old Country for the first time, it must be difficult for one who has never left it to appreciate his feelings. He lands, say at Plymouth, some sunny day in autumn, takes his seat in the Great Western express, and is whirled to London through the pleasant land of Devonshire. On either side as he speeds along is bright green pasture-land; the elm, the oak, and the beech are everywhere, with their varied and verdant foliage. The fields with their luxuriant hedgerows seem to him absurdly small, the cattle and horses abnormally sleek. The country is intersected with a network of broad level roads, it is dotted with beautifully kept parks and picturesque villages. Here and there is a shady wood or a trimly banked river. The whole place is one great cultivated garden, and even spots far from "flourishing peopled towns" seem in his eyes full of the "various bustle of resort."

But take an Englishman from the Old Country and set him down for a day's ride in the middle of Australia—what are *his* feelings? All around him is the great monotonous ocean of the illimitable bush. The universal sombre-hued gum tree, with its pendulous, side-set evergreen leaves, quivers at him from every side. The road is rough, irregular and rutty, skirted by a plain wooden fence, or as often as not open to the surrounding country. Here and there is the grisly skeleton of a dead tree. Soon he comes to a part where the bush has been "ring-barked" for the sake of the herbage, and he rides through miles and miles of these same eerie skeletons, whose dead fallen boughs lie scattered all over the great paddocks. After riding some hours, perhaps, he comes to a "town," composed of a single street of houses, plain, low, and unpretending, built of wood and roofed with corrugated iron. Leaving this behind, suppose him to emerge upon the plains. The grass is thick, long and yellow, growing well up to his stirrups; the surface of the soil is rough and stony; he seems surrounded by a vast yellow sea; a water-mill on the horizon has the aspect of a distant ship; perhaps miles away glimmers the deceitful haze of the mirage; most striking feature of all—save when passing through the township, until he reaches the station whither we may imagine him to be bound—he may not have seen a living soul.

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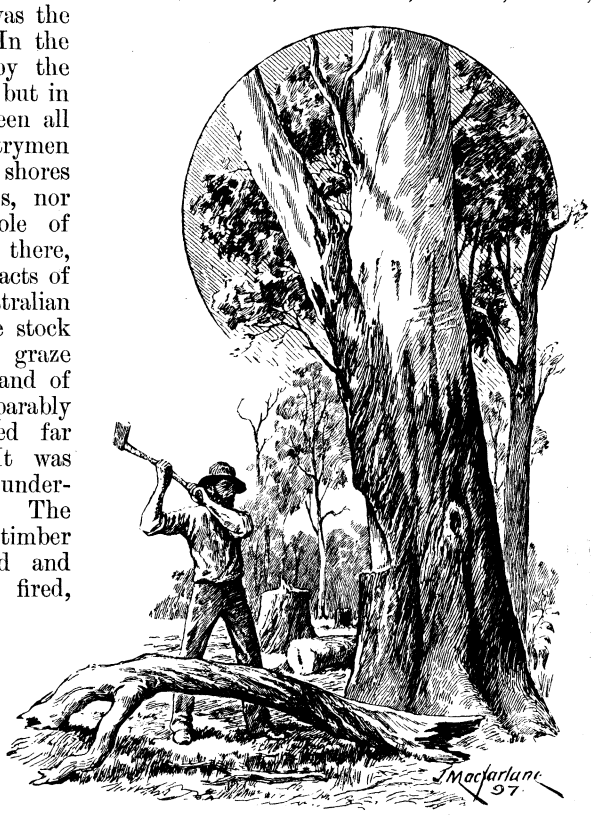
Such even to this day is the aspect of many parts of Australia, and with the necessary variations the same story might be told of New Zealand, or Canada, or the Cape. Where there is no scenery to enhance the view, the country has an air not so much of virginity as of untidiness and desolation. There is this enormous set-off, that it lies under skies of cloudless blue. Bathed in that brilliant sunshine, even a forest of ring-barked gum trees looks far less dispiriting than one would suppose. It is only these up-country districts that can give one even a faint idea of what was the task of the pioneer of colonisation. In the Cape much of the work was done by the Dutch, and in Canada by the French, but in Australia and New Zealand it has been all our own. When our fellow-countrymen first set foot on these antipodean shores there were neither towns, nor roads, nor railways, nor telegraphs. The whole of Australia, saving the plains here and there, lay covered with the interminable tracts of the gum tree. Fortunately the Australian bush is comparatively sparse, and the stock could be turned loose at once to graze between the trees. In the North Island of New Zealand the bush, though incomparably more grand and majestic, presented far greater obstacles to the colonist. It was permeated with a thick and tangled undergrowth and was destitute of herbage. The undergrowth had to be cut, the timber worth preserving had to be felled and removed, and the whole space to be fired, consumed and cleared before a beginning could be made. Even then the surface had to be sown with English grass, and this to become properly established before the country was fit for flocks and herds. Millions of acres of bush still remain in the North Island, and the process of clearing is going on every year. Houses had to be built, roads and railways had to be constructed, all the necessaries and decencies of life had to be transported from the other side of the world in the days before steamships were. To say nothing of hardships, the early settlers carried their very lives in their hands, and the squatter as he rode over the country could never be certain that an armed native was not watching him from behind a tree, or waiting for him in the long grass. But the work thus taken in hand was steadily pursued with all the stubborn enterprise of Englishmen, and these waste places of the earth are gradually being reduced to the aspect of civilised lands.

But what, after all, do we mean by a new country, and what is its place in the great economic fabric of our civilisation? A new country is, primarily speaking, a place for carrying on the pastoral and agricultural industries on a large scale. In our own Colonies the pastoral predominates over the agricultural. Canada and South Australia alone export grain in any considerable quantities. The great grain countries of the world are, of course, Russia, India,



CLEARING.

Argentina, and the United States. What our Colonies really depend on is sheep and cattle, and their attendant industries. First and foremost among these comes the production of wool, so much so that it sometimes seems to the observer that the whole Colony he is visiting is absorbed in its growth, shearing, packing, transportation, and shipment. Next comes the frozen mutton trade, which has grown up in our own generation with the most astonishing rapidity. Next, frozen and chilled beef, and then, a long way after these, butter, tallow,

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and hides. These industries, it must be remembered, are carried on, not in the slow, conservative, almost retail spirit of the English farmer, who seems to be, as it were, himself a product of his own soil, but on a wholesale scale, by business men possessed of a spirit of enterprise and speculation, numbering their acreage by the thousand,

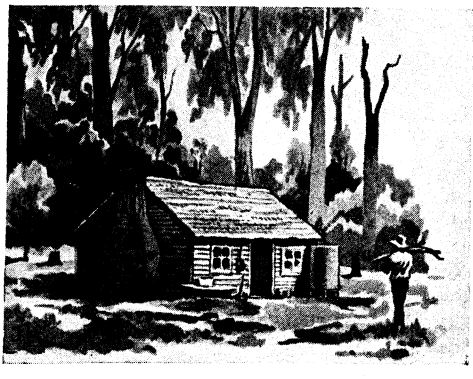
FOSSICKING FOR GOLD.

their cattle by the tens of thousand, and their sheep often by the hundreds of thousand. Moreover, their standard of life is not that of the English farmer, but rather that of the English country gentleman. They dine late and dress for dinner; their wives are often cultivated ladies; their houses contain pianos and libraries; they belong to the club in the capital city, and in exclusiveness of class feeling they would compare with any aristocracy on the face of the earth.

First and foremost, as I have said, the Colonies are places for the rearing of sheep and cattle. In the natural course of events there are no factories in a new country. Colonists buy most of their manufactured articles at home. Mr. Rhodes boasted the other day that there was not a single factory in Cape Colony. The Colonist, in fact, sends his wool to Yorkshire to be made into cloth, and then has to send for the cloth back again to make into clothes. Where factories do exist they are generally the result of a policy of protection. But there is one other group of industries that seem to mark new countries for their own, and that is what are known as the "extractive industries," more especially gold-mining. There is much coal at Newcastle, N.S.W.; there is tin in plenty in Tasmania; there is silver in heaps at Broken Hill; but what surrounds these Colonies with a sort of seductive halo is gold. By a strange coincidence, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and now, it seems, even Canada, have all been found to be rich in the precious metal. As we have seen in our own days, in West Australia, Klondike, and the Rand, the cry of gold is raised, the loose population of the earth flocks to the diggings, and the whole character of the Colony is changed. At once a new market is created, and all the industries that supply it are called into being. The population goes up in leaps and bounds, and as there is, as a rule, only one centre of life in each Colony, the capital soon swells to the proportion of a large city. The romance has gone out of Australian gold-mining. There was a time when the adventurous digger found nuggets of the size of marbles in the surface soil, and

> Many all day in dazzling river stood,
> To take the rich-ored driftings of the flood.

Those days seem to have come again in the arctic air of Alaska. In Australia they are no more. A few belated vagabonds still earn a precarious livelihood by "fossicking" in old river beds, but gold-mining is now a regular business, financed from London, and carried on by shafts and tunnels and great crushing machines. The Colonial miner goes to his work and does his



A SELECTOR'S HOME.

eight hours with pick and shovel like any collier in South Wales.

But to turn from this glittering subject to

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the real business of the place, let us try to picture to ourselves the life of a squatter starting a new station somewhere in Australia. We will assume that he is young and vigorous, and has a small but adequate capital, that he has taken on lease from the Government some 10,000 acres, and has made arrangements to stock them. He goes out by railway as far as the railway will take him, and then rides out to his future home some forty, or fifty, or hundred miles through the bush. He takes with him some firm of bush-carpenters, with whom he has contracted for the building of his house, and a dozen odd labourers to do fencing and other work that may be required. First, then, to select the site for his house. He will have made sure of having a creek on his run (there are no rivers in the greater part of Australia, only great straggling creeks), and he will choose some spot on a slightly elevated ground, not far from the creek. Then an irregular shanty, built of a few planks and corrugated iron, will be rigged up for temporary shelter, and the work will begin. The house will be a simple bungalow, built of wood, surrounded by a verandah, and roofed with corrugated iron. At either end will stand two immense water-tanks, also of corrugated iron, so arranged as to receive all the rain-water that drains from the roof. Only those who have lived in Australia know how precious such water is. Of course, if the site chosen for a house is not clear of trees, he must first clear it. The timber required for building is felled and sawn in some neighbouring scrub, or selected from the surrounding bush. Gradually the framework rises, the stables and wood-shed are built, and the stock-yards are put together. Meanwhile the run must be divided into paddocks, care being taken that each paddock has a share of the creek, and the whole must be fenced. It is weary, dreary work fencing, but it will be done at last. All this time no such luxuries as butter, milk, vegetables, or even beer for these sturdy pioneers. Their fare is mutton, killed on the spot, "billy-tea," boiled on the camp fire, and "damper," baked in its ashes. The camp fire is indeed the centre of the life of the embryo station. There is never any difficulty about making a fire in Australia, except of course in the rainy season. The whole continent seems strewn with dead boughs. A fire can be kindled in five minutes, and once kindled it never need go out. It burns on, night and day, though often reduced to a glowing mass amid a heap of pure white ashes. A tripod is erected, a "billy" slung over the fire, and anyone can then have a pannikin of tea for the asking. At last everything is completed; the furniture is sent for; the stock is trucked down to the nearest railway station and driven through the bush; the regular station hands are engaged, and the life of the new squatter begins. Perhaps his whole fortune is in the venture, and more too, for he has probably been forced to borrow heavily from his bank. A single season of drought may ruin him. He takes his chance, and if success does attend him, surely there is no one who has deserved it better.

ON THE WALLABY.
Photo by Wilson, Aberdeen.

Or take another specimen of a Colonial start in life, and one of a somewhat humbler order—that of a "selector." A selector is a small farmer. He owes his name to the fact that at one period of Colonial history small settlers were empowered to "select" for their homes pieces of land in the middle of other land already leased to squatters—needless to say to the immense indignation of the squatters. The selector is not a "gentleman," and has no pretensions to be considered one. He does not belong to a club at Sydney or Brisbane, he does not dress for dinner, and his wife does not play the piano or read poetry, but he is as free and independent as any squatter on the countryside. We will take the case of a man who has been working some years as a station hand for the usual wage of a pound a week and his keep—a good proportion of which he has saved. The shearing season comes round and he becomes a shearer. A first-class shearer can often earn a cheque for £50 in a few weeks. In this way he gets together a little capital, and is able without much difficulty to obtain a lease of a few hundred acres of land. He, too, of course, must build his house and fence in his selection. Perhaps he grows grain and fodder, and supplies the neighbouring

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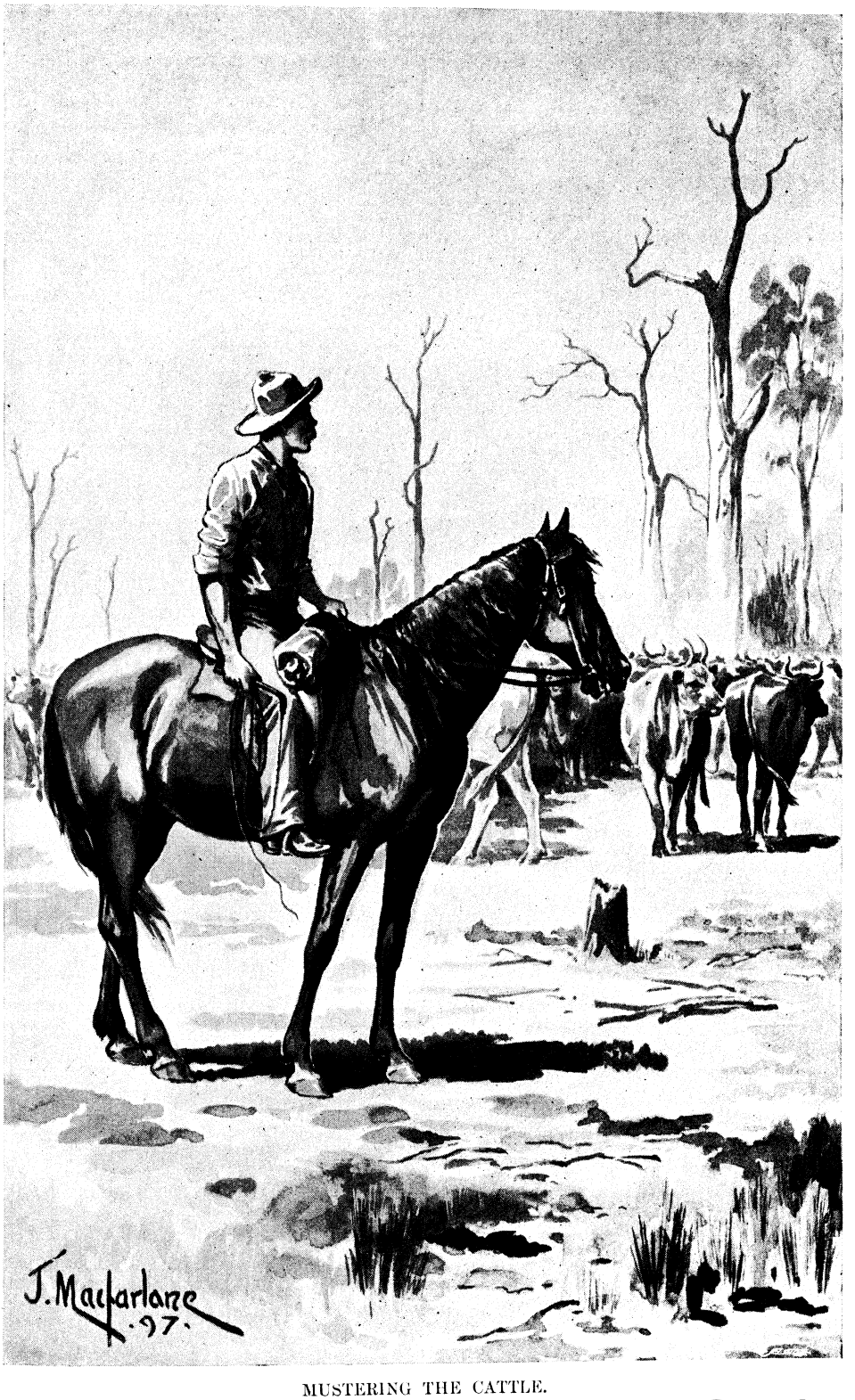

MUSTERING THE CATTLE.

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country town and stations; perhaps he takes to "boiling down," and converts every diseased quadruped within a radius of fifty miles into good, wholesome tallow; perhaps he succeeds in inducing a bank to lend him enough money to start a dairy factory; perhaps he prefers to farm stock in his own small way. At any rate, there he is, a valuable citizen, with "a stake in the country," and a bulwark against the machinations of labour parties.

Such is some of the stuff that Colonies are made of. Unfortunately these picturesque and independent figures do not form the whole picture. Here, as elsewhere, the limited company is forcing its way in, and, wherever it appears, the salaried manager, responsible to directors at the capital, takes the place of the squatter, responsible to no one but himself. Moreover, behind squatters, selectors and limited companies alike, looms an institution which is at the very basis of Colonial life, and whose full significance only Colonials apprehend. That institution is the bank. The truth is that the first and most elementary fact about a new country is this, that the whole thing is run upon borrowed money. What else is the meaning of these long lines of railway through unpeopled pastures, this network of telegraph lines, these artificial harbours, these solid and substantial public buildings? These things are not the unaided work of a mere handful of settlers. They mean that the accumulated savings of the Old Country have been poured into the new. For these matters the conduit pipe has, of course, been the Colonial loan, floated by the Colonial Government upon the London market. And so it comes that every year the Colonial taxpayer pays by way of interest a heavy bill for these railways and telegraphs and harbours and Houses of Parliament. So much for public borrowing. But now to come to private—and this is where the great banks come in. It must be clearly understood that the squatter, though he assumes the standing of a country gentleman, is a landholder and not a landlord. He is not a capitalist, he is an adventurer, an *entrepreneur*. To begin with, he takes up land on lease from the Government; for that he must pay an annual rent. Next he finds it desirable to have a certain portion of his run as freehold. In all probability he has not enough capital for the purchase, so he must borrow—from a bank. He has to stock his run when he has got it. Once more the bank comes in useful. His sheep are killed off by a drought. His only means of getting on his legs is his bank again. He may succeed in his speculations and free himself from these preliminary shackles. If not he becomes largely the bank's creature. He rears his stock, and when the season comes he shears or kills them, and sends away their wool or frozen carcasses. Out of the money he so gets he must pay his rent to the Government and his wages to his station hands and shearers; he must meet the ordinary working expenses of the run and support his wife and family according to the standard of his class. But above all, under the dread penalty of foreclosure and ruin, he has to meet the interest due to his bank. And now to look at the process from the other end. The Colonial banks have a certain initial capital in shares, the rest they obtain on deposit at a comparatively high rate of interest. Accordingly, in the old days when prices were high and Australia was booming, the British investor cheerfully deposited his money, the money was sent to the Colonies and shovelled out in handfuls to the prosperous squatters. Anyone who wanted an advance could get it for the asking. Then came the fall in prices, the contraction of credit, and the inevitable smash. The banks went, and the squatters with them. When the banks were reconstructed, the process already begun in the old days was intensified. The bank foreclosed, and the bankrupt squatter was retained as manager. Many an unfortunate man was turned adrift with a hundred pounds and a couple of horses to make way for a more economical substitute. Many another retains a mere nominal independence. Millions of acres are held by the banks direct, and millions more mortgaged to them up to their full value.

But enough of this dreary incubus which hangs over Colonial life. Banks, after all, have other functions in the community besides that of reducing unfortunate squatters to beggary. In point of fact the banks, and what are called the "financial institutions," do half the squatter's business for him. Side by side with the banks are a number of big companies, with such names as "Mortgage and Finance Corporation," "United Produce Agency," "Loan and Mercantile Agency," and so on, and a certain number of large firms such as that of Dalgety and Co. These and the banks have their agencies in every country town. The squatter, or selector, drives in his produce, and then the agent takes charge of it and transports it to the London market. That is the last the

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squatter sees of it until he gets the advice-note of the amount placed to his credit by his bank or financial institution, and the amount debited for commission and forwarding and freezing expenses.

The work of a sheep station, though varied, is not exacting, and very few hands are employed for the greater part of the year. The sheep have periodically to be dipped for scab, or dosed for various internal disorders, or their feet have to be clipped for foot-rot. As the paddocks are large and the sheep numbered by the thousand, this involves a vast deal of riding and mustering, and hunting in gullies and valleys, all of which the visitor to the Colonies finds excessively diverting. Rock-salt has to be distributed about the paddocks, the fences have to be patched, fresh horses to be broken in, and numberless little odds and ends to be attended to. But shearing time is the squatter's harvest. Then the station is all alive and bustling. Shearers ride and tramp in from all around—some from the neighbouring selectors' farms, many wandering from station to station. They are all housed in a shed set apart for them, and daily rations are served out according to a fixed scale. The sheep are all mustered and brought up to the yards, and thence drafted to the shearing pens. The shearers are paid at the rate of from fifteen shillings to twenty shillings a hundred, and the fierceness of their competition is tremendous. Each shearer has his stall, and as soon as the word is given each man rushes to the pen, seizes a shivering sheep by the hind leg, and in a few moments the shears are flying deftly all over the animal's body. The fleece comes off in one beautiful white piece, like a mat of wool. Those who have only seen a fleece on a sheep's back little imagine how soft and regular and pure is its under surface. A tar-pot stands handy in case of cuts, and an overseer walks about to inflict the agreed fines upon careless shearers. Sheep after sheep is seized and rushed through this process with amazing rapidity, turned into the shearer's stall, counted, registered, and released. Meanwhile the piles of fleeces are collected and stored in the wool-shed for scouring. On a big station the shearing often lasts a couple of months, and the substantial cheques which the shearers receive (all station wages are paid by cheque) would make a British agricultural labourer's mouth water. And so the harvest of the station is got in, and pressed and packed, and sent down to the railway, and thence to the coast, and, last of all, shipped off by the great liners to the London wool sales.

It is hard to give any idea of the "feel" of life in the bush. In spite of its loneliness and exile, those who have tried it say that it has for them an irresistible fascination. When one is thirty miles from a railway station, and has to drive twenty miles to call on a friend; when one's letters and papers are regularly fetched from afar off by a boy on horseback; when one rides over roads

"ONE'S LETTERS ARE REGULARLY FETCHED BY A BOY ON HORSEBACK."

unmade, on steeds unclipped and unshod, or careers through the boundless bush with four horses harnessed to a buckboard, there is a sense of largeness and scope about one's movements that few things in this world can surpass. In the middle of that great ocean of trees one has the sensation of being at once on sea and on land. The daily train which speeds over these vast tracts of country seems—to use the expression of Robert Louis Stevenson—to be making an inland voyage. The great thing to realise about Australian

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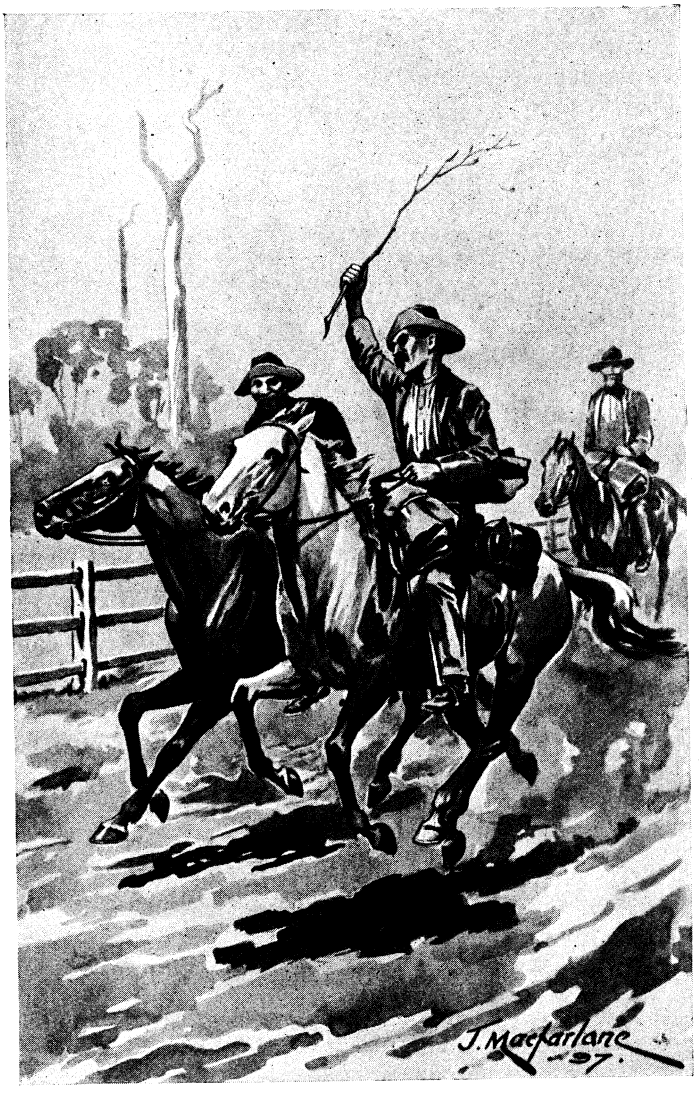
bush-life is the universality of the horse. No one ever dreams of walking any distance, except the unfortunate "swagman." To take a walk is regarded almost as an eccentricity. The inhabitants of the bush are not "men of ideas"; its landscape is often dreary and desolate; it has neither art nor



SHEARERS RIDING IN.

architecture nor history; but the cloudless climate, the strange beasts and birds, the unaccustomed flowers, the universal eucalyptic fragrance of the trees, the feeling of immense distance from home—all this, combined with the consciousness that this strange country is peopled by one's fellow Englishmen and Englishwomen, who have brought their native language and laws and institutions from the other side of the globe, touches the feelings far more powerfully than the squalid splendour of the gorgeous East, or all the historic panoply of European civilisation.

For myself, I know of no more delightful experience than a whole day's ride with the overseer round a big Australian run. You rise in the cool early morning and breakfast, before the sun is well up, on beefsteak, fresh scones, quince jelly, and great cups of tea. Meanwhile the horses have been driven into the yard: you take your bridle, and, selecting your own steed out of the thirty or forty there, you edge him into a corner and succeed in getting the bit into his mouth. Then you saddle him and ride off into the bush, the sun shining on the grey quivering gum leaves, or on the glistening foliage of the box. The overseer rides through each paddock in turn, noticing the condition of the sheep, inspecting the creek or water-wells, keeping an eye to the fences when he passes them. At midday you draw up at a boundary rider's hut. He is married, perhaps, and his wife spreads her cleanest cloth and gives you lunch, while the overseer retails to the lady all the gossip of the station. Then on again. Four or five miles ahead you discern the bright colours of a mob of cattle, and canter towards them. You find a band of men galloping round a thousand cattle in a circle, You stay and join them; and when the work is finished, and the cattle are separated, counted, and drafted off, you all ride off together to the next boundary rider's hut. And now the sun is nearing the edge of the great yellow plain. You mount once more, and all canter home together amid the rich hues of the Australian sunset.

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A ROYAL OCULIST.

DUKE CARL THEODORE OF BAVARIA AT HOME.

By A. de Burgh.

THE DUCAL CASTLE OF POSSENHOFEN.

THE second royal silver wedding of this year is to be celebrated on the last day but one of April. The celebrants, though scions of the ancient royal houses of Wittelsbach and Braganza, have not made their name and fame by valiant deeds on the field of battle, by the subtle art of statecraft, or by great moves on the political chess-board; nevertheless, they are hero and heroine in the most noble meaning of the word, for their claim to greatness is that of true benefactors of mankind.

On the shores of the Lake of Starenberg, not far from the Bavarian capital of Munich, situated in a most charming spot, surrounded by beautiful gardens and an extensive park, stands the early home of Duke Carl Theodore of Bavaria—the Castle of Possenhofen.

Duke Maximilian and the Duchess Ludovica, his wife, who was a sister of the mother of the present Emperor of Austria and of King Ludwig I. of Bavaria, had a family of three sons and five daughters, the latter being the Princess of Thurn and Taxis, the late Empress of Austria, the ex-Queen of Naples, the Countess of Trani, and the late Duchess d'Alençon.

The eldest son, Prince Ludwig, forfeited his succession to the Dukedom by a morganatic marriage with an actress of the Court Theatre in Munich, and after the death of the Duke Maximilian, Prince Carl Theodore, the younger son, became Duke and inherited the various estates belonging to the title.

DUKE CARL THEODORE OF BAVARIA.
Photo by Stuffler, Munich.

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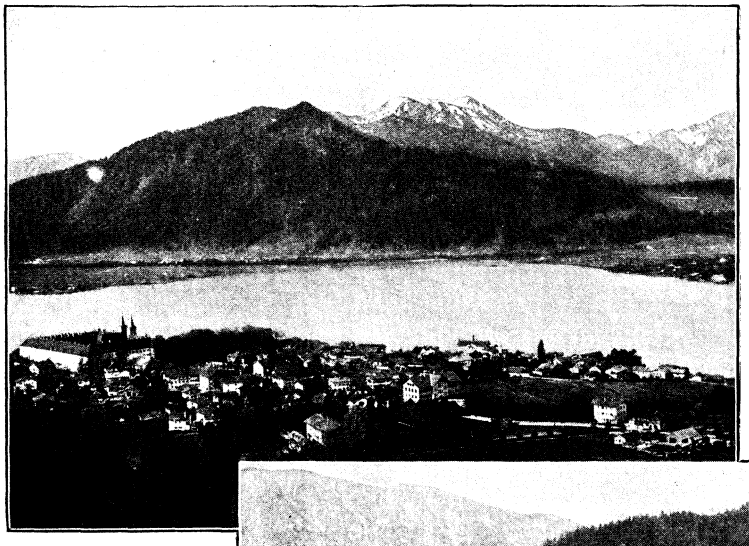
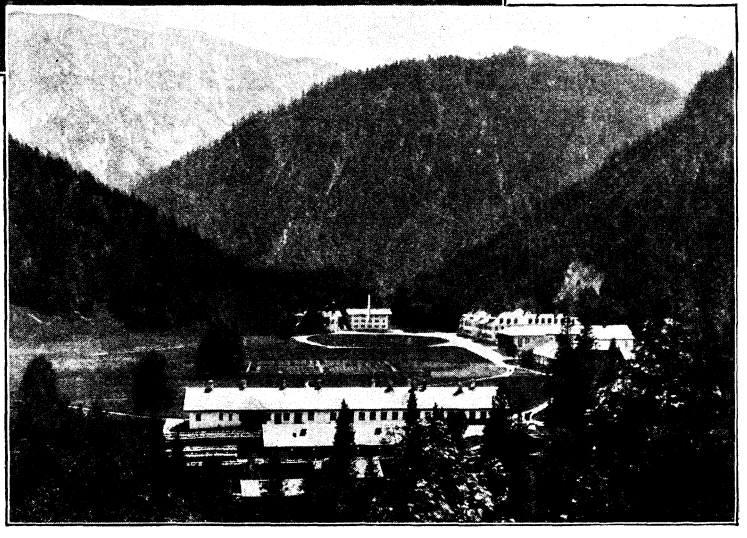
Of the youth of the young Prince we know little beyond the fact that he was always serious and studious, and, like his late sister Elizabeth, a dreamer. Court life was not to his taste, neither did he feel a call for the profession most generally adopted by princes of the blood—the army.

When quite a lad he visited some of the great medical schools of Europe, became in turn a student at various universities, devoting his time to the study of medicine and surgery, and passed, when twenty-three, through the difficult medical and surgical examinations for the degree of M.D. He soon became a specialist in diseases of the eye, and by degrees came to be considered an oculist of great renown. About two years ago he performed his thousandth operation for cataract. To-day he stands in the front rank of his profession, and so great is his fame that when some time ago the Emperor William injured one of his eyes whilst on board his yacht the *Hohenzollern*, Duke Carl Theodore was sent for post haste to Kiel to attend him, and after hurrying from his lake-side home to the great German seaport, succeeded in restoring the injured organ within a few days to its normal condition.

The name of this royal oculist is known to the world, not only on account of his achievements in his profession, but also on account of his generosity, kindness, and humanity. He devotes his life almost entirely to the service of the poorest classes, and those who, while not exactly coming under that heading, are still unable to afford the high fees usually demanded by leading eye-doctors. Patients without number have to thank the Duke for the preservation of their sight, or for the restoration of it, for into countless nights has this royal benefactor brought day and light.



TEGERNSEE, WITH THE DUCAL CASTLE ON THE LEFT.



BAD KREUTH, IN THE BAVARIAN ALPS, THE PROPERTY OF DUKE CARL THEODORE.

The Duke is assisted in his work of mercy by his Duchess (*née* Princess Maria Josepha of Braganza), to whom he was married on April 29th, 1874, after he had been a widower for some years. The Duchess very often acts as his assistant when some un-

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usually delicate operation is to be performed, and her Royal Highness knows to perfection how to soothe and prepare nervous sufferers for the ordeal before them. The Duke and Duchess are both extremely fond of country life, and have brought up their family of three daughters and two sons to share their love of the beauties of Nature and to enjoy outdoor sports. Their daughter, Princess Marie Gabriele, is passionately fond of riding, driving, and lawn tennis, but more than all does she favour cycling. She and her sisters are probably the most accomplished lady cyclists in Germany. These facts doubtless have much to do with the young Princess's fair health and lovely complexion, which renders her one of the prettiest and most attractive of the Bavarian Princesses.

THE DUCHESS CARL THEODORE AND HER DAUGHTER, PRINCESS GABRIELE.
Photo by Baumann, Munich.

The Duke's first wife was a daughter of King Johann of Saxony, and his eldest daughter, the child of this first marriage, is the Duchess of Urach, who before her marriage was one of the most studious of royal ladies, and preferred reading to any social distraction of her position. Although she is now the mother of a young family, the Duchess still finds time for study as well as for writing, although her literary productions are not given to the public.

The mother of the Duke used Possenhofen as her dower-house, and lived there over fifty years, the Duke himself making the Castle of Tegernsee, a huge palace on the shores of the lake bearing the same name, his principal home. Here and at Bad Kreuth, which is also his property, he lives with his family in

THE DUKE'S THREE DAUGHTERS, PRINCESSES ELIZABETH, SOPHIA, AND GABRIELE.
Photo by Stuffler, Munich.

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summer; in winter the ducal family move to Meran, the celebrated winter resort in the Southern Tyrol, where Duke Carl Theodore owns a beautiful and commodious villa. It will be remembered that this was the scene last February of the melancholy death of the young Hereditary Prince of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.

The Castle of Tegernsee the Duke has converted into an eye-hospital, and the Princesses themselves undertake to superintend the nursing of the patients, who, if they are in poor circumstances, are taken in without any charge.

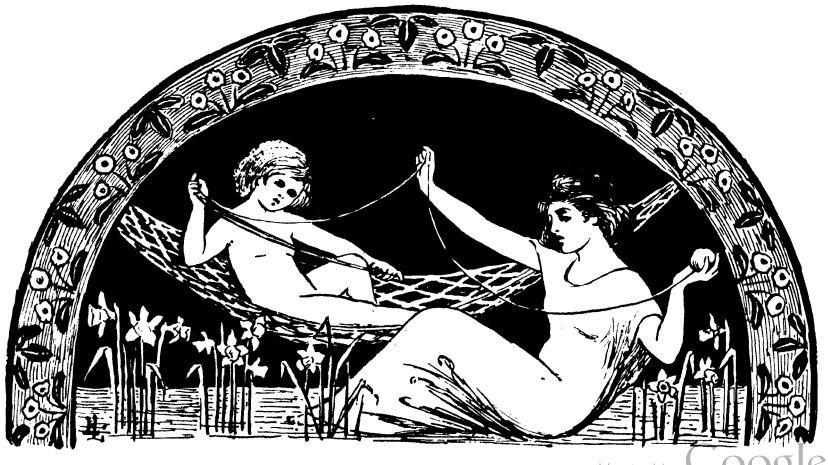
About eighteen months ago the German Empress and her children paid a visit of some duration to Tegernsee, and she and the ducal family became very intimate, and the imperial and ducal children, clad in the national costume, could often be seen making excursions together on land and water to the many charming places of the neighbourhood. The Empress and her sons and baby daughter seemed thoroughly to enjoy their life here in the Bavarian highlands, where they dispensed entirely with all Court restrictions and ceremonials.

The Duke and Duchess and their family are naturally extremely popular and beloved in and around Tegernsee, and pages could be filled with instances showing the nobility of heart they possess in the highest degree. It seems to be the Prince's one desire to do good to those who are less happily situated than himself, and he finds his joy and reward in seeing suffering alleviated.

Well may the august couple look back with satisfaction upon the twenty-five years of their married life, for they have adorned their high position with nobler qualities than those merely requisite for social pre-eminence.

Their quiet life, it is true, has been sorely disturbed and saddened by the terrible occurrences in the Bavarian and Austrian families to whom they are so closely related, for, within a comparatively short period, the Duke received the tragic news that both his favourite sisters had, in turn, fallen victims to a violent death—the Empress Elizabeth murdered, the Duchess d'Alençon burnt at the Charity Bazaar in Paris; that his cousin, King Ludwig II., had committed suicide by drowning himself in the very lake on the shores of which the Duke was born and brought up. The tragedy connected with his nephew, the Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria, is too well remembered to need repeating. The Duke lost his younger brother also before that Prince had reached the prime of life, but he has found consolation for those sorrows in the fulfilment of the noble task which he has set himself, and the happiness he experiences in his family circle makes it a peaceful haven from the stormy and troubled seas which have raged around the fortunes of his house.

As already remarked, Duke Carl Theodore is neither soldier nor statesman, neither politician nor philosopher, but he is admired and esteemed by the world, and the proudest emperors and kings are honoured by the friendship of the man who exercises his genius and skill for the benefit of suffering humanity.



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The Coming of Spring.

By Blanche Littler.

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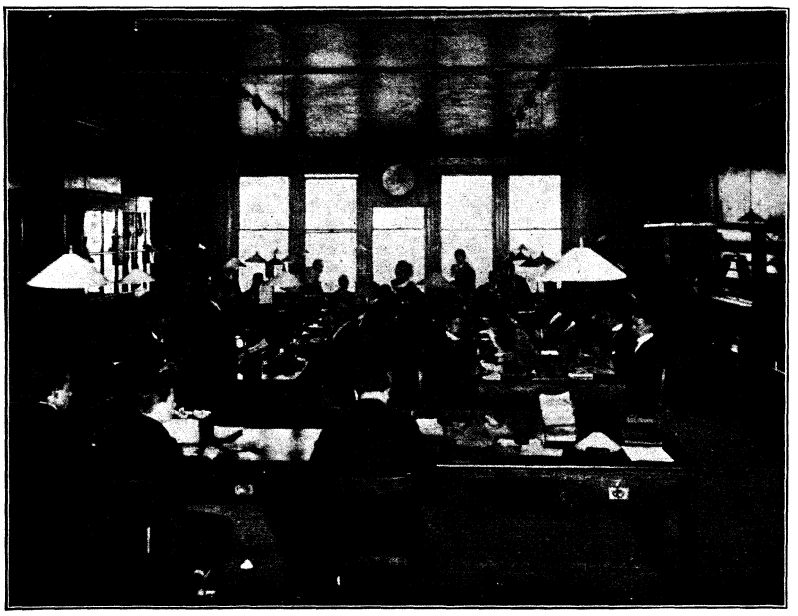
HOW RAILWAYS TELEGRAPH:

A VISIT TO THE INSTRUMENT ROOM OF THE GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY COMPANY.

By George A. Wade.

Illustrated from Photographs by W. H. Bunnett.

EVER since its first invention the electric-telegraph has been a perfect mystery to the uneducated and uninitiated, and countless jokes have been made upon the average man's ignorance of its methods of working. But it may safely be said that even the educated man—who fancies he knows all about it!—would confess his scanty knowledge, and express his surprise, after going round the telegraphic department of one of our great railways, and seeing what is done there and how it is done. And of all such departments none can be more interesting than that of the Great Eastern Railway Company, at Liverpool Street Station, London, which stands conspicuous alike for its size, for its splendid equipment, and for the magnitude of the work it gets through every day. Thanks to Mr. F. T. Hollins, the head of this celebrated department, who gave me, for the Windsor Magazine, every facility to see what was done, and to Mr. R. Millie, his right-hand man, who courteously acted as my guide, and explained everything most fully and clearly, I am here able to give some idea of the workings of this important branch of the modern telegraphic system.



THE INSTRUMENT ROOM, G.E.R. TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT, LIVERPOOL STREET.

On the upper floor of the building known as Hamilton House, Bishopsgate Street, E.C., there are several rooms devoted to the telegraphic work of the Great Eastern Railway. Let us first look into the "instrument room." Here we find a fine, airy apartment, 60 feet long by 25 feet broad, covered with long, narrow tables, on which are all kinds of telegraphic instruments, each one having its own worker. A continual tick, tick, tick, is ever going on—a perpetual noise which at first drives you half crazy, and makes you wonder how ever these men can possibly stand it for eight or ten hours a day! But when you remark on this to Mr. Millie, his genial face lights up and he merely replies—

"Use, my dear sir, use; all use! Don't you recollect how the great Sir Andrew Clark once said, 'You can get used to any mortal thing, so that you don't feel it'?"

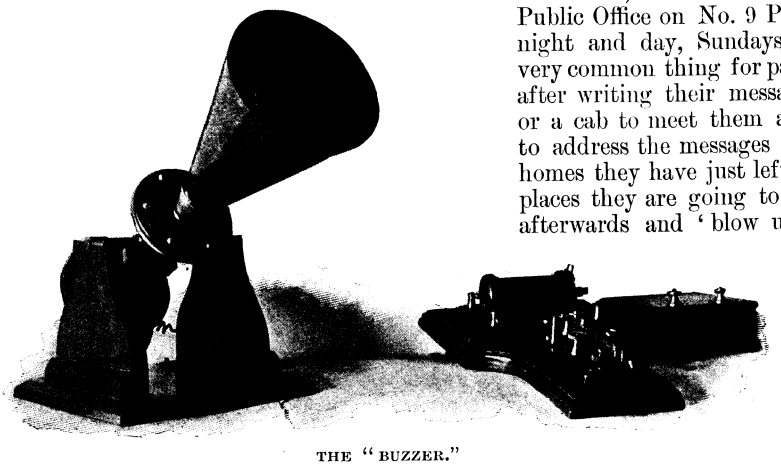
In this room there are seventeen single-needle instruments, six bell-sounders, four

single-current Morse instruments, two duplex ones, one quadruplex, two phonophones, and one buzzer! You who have been deafened by the tick, tick of two or three instruments in the local post-office, just fancy how it sounds when all the above thirty-three or so are going at the same time! But this is not nearly all that goes on here: there are many other instruments besides.

At 9.58 a.m., prompt, all work is stopped in this room as if by magic. For exactly on the very second of 10 o'clock a time-current comes from Greenwich, and this is sent, by means of an instrument in the room, to all circuits communicating with this head office; and so every place on the Great Eastern Railway line, signal-boxes, stations, etc., gets the exact time every morning at 10 a.m., and sets its clocks by it.

In addition to the instruments mentioned, there are, in this room, five pneumatic tubes and five single-line block instruments for working the same; there is also a telephone to each office with which the tubes are connected, and a "telephone exchange," to which belong some forty lines connected with various offices in the old and new stations at Liverpool Street.

Near the door, on entering the room from the corridor, is an "electric message receiver," and from 4.30 a.m. till 12 p.m. this is in constant use. All the telegraphic instruments in this busy room are worked on the Morse code, and from first thing in the morning till last thing at night messages are



THE "BUZZER."

ever pouring in or going out. These messages relate to every kind of question that is possible in connection with a big railway, or with the public, for this department receives public messages, too, from its various stations, etc., and transmits them on to the General Post Office. As one or two instances of the remarkable celerity and exactness with which this is done, let me give some that occurred during my visit. A message was handed in at Parkstone Quay, Harwich; the time then was 6.9; it was received at this Liverpool Street room at 6.11; and was sent off again to the General Post Office at St. Martin's le Grand, and received there at 6.12! But whilst I was still marvelling at this, an even finer feat was done—a message over the same ground exactly being given with the times as 6.36, 6.37, and 6.38! Two minutes for the whole job!

Photo by] [*Webster, Wanstead.*

MR. F. T. HOLLINS,
Chief of the G.E.R. Telegraph Department.

Mr. Millie told me one or two amusing stories of how the public use this service on the line. "There are," said he, "two offices here—viz., the Instrument Room and the Public Office on No. 9 Platform—kept open night and day, Sundays included. It is a very common thing for passengers in a hurry, after writing their messages asking friends or a cab to meet them at their destinations, to address the messages to themselves at the homes they have just left, instead of to the places they are going to. Then they come afterwards and 'blow us up' because the telegram 'did not go' to their destination! And when we show them the telegram, they simply gaze at what they wrote, in perfect amazement, and not unfrequently remark very vigorously that they 'must be fools'—often with a strong adjective added to the noun!"

Other passengers, my guide mentioned,

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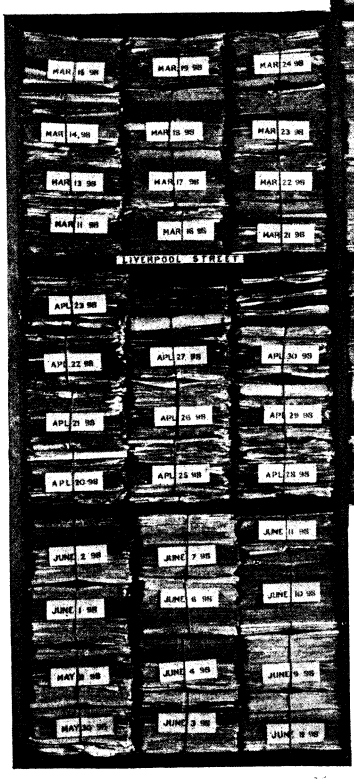
frequently put the name and street, but forget to add the town. All such messages are treated as if for the Metropolis, and so many of them never reach their proper destination. A man came one day complaining of the non-sending of his message to Cambridge, said the Company had made him lose pounds upon pounds by it, and so on; but when shown his message, with no name of town at the end of the address, he was simply dumbfounded.

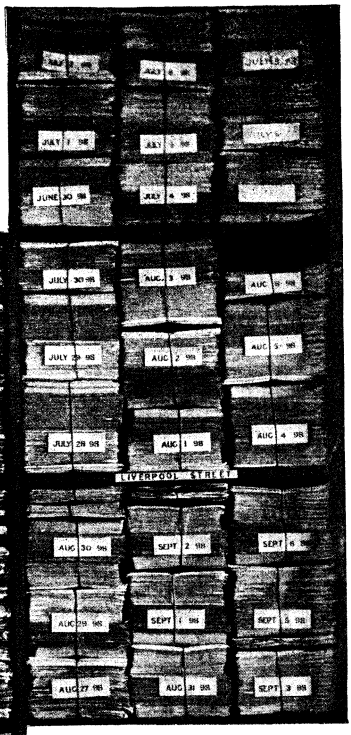
Let us look a little at the tremendous number of messages dealt with in this room daily. The morning of my first visit was rather slack, but even then there were ninety in two hours between Liverpool Street and Harwich. On a busy day there are often twice as many, and there is a record of 200 having once been reached—in two hours! Between Liverpool Street and Cambridge the average number of messages is about 400 per day, and on the day previous to my visit, though the work had been exceptionally heavy, there had only been one message, out of nearly 500, delayed as much as ten minutes between these two points!



And this reminds me that there is a perfect system for keeping account of late messages. A regular check is kept on them by means of a form furnished to each receiving clerk, and he puts down how many minutes late the message is, and any remarks thereon. And, later on, the reason for this delay is inquired into, and the causes removed so far as possible.

It is worth noting that the Great Eastern Railway Company is the only one that uses the quadruplex instrument, by which four messages can be sent at once; and this is done between Liverpool Street and Harwich, owing to the extremely heavy traffic and the necessity for quick-dealing with all despatches. Duplex instruments are used for messages between the chief office and Cambridge or Newmarket, which are also extremely numerous.

Speaking of Newmarket, I must mention the "buzzer," which the reader will remember as being in this instrument room. The buzzer is a kind of whistling or buzzing instrument which, by means of condensers, "buzzes" messages through on race days between Newmarket and Liverpool Street at the rate of eighty an hour. I had the opportunity of seeing it working.



CUPBOARD SHELVES WITH TELEGRAMS FILED FOR REFERENCE.

A test-box and galvanometer in this room afford a means for periodically testing the accuracy and perfection of all the electrical wires going from this office to different places. Every wire terminating in the test-box has the name of the place it is connected with printed below it, so that the electrician sees at a glance, when any wire gets out of order, with which one he has to deal.

The authorities in control of this telegraphic department are extremely strict in seeing that every message received or sent is duly recorded. Four clerks are kept whose especial duty it is to check the various messages, and every person thus receiving a message to deal with has to sign it with his initials and the exact time of its being given to him. One copy of this he keeps himself, and the other is given up. So that if any

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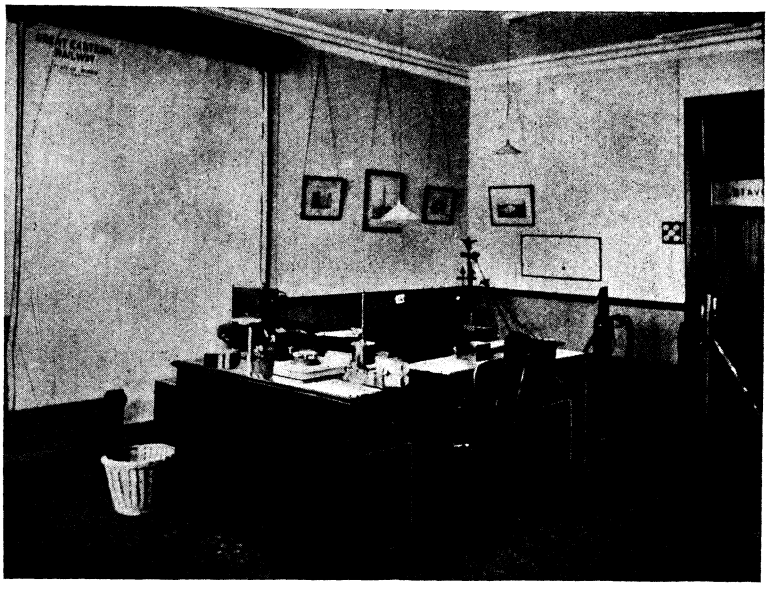
question should arise later as to when or by whom some message was dealt with, there can be no dispute about the matter, the checking clerk's own initials are the witness in the case. The great importance of this system will be best recognised when one remembers the vast number of telegrams dealt with. For instance, on July 30 last year there were no less than 1,278 postal telegrams passed through the instrument room—that is, telegrams sent by the public travelling on the line!

One portion of the work done in this department—viz., that of the pneumatic tubes—cannot fail to be of great interest to every visitor who is privileged to see it. There are, as I previously stated, five of these tubes, of which two go to the platforms of the station, one goes to the new building, as it is called, and another goes to the old, and the fifth goes to Bishopsgate Street station. Besides the great number of telegraphic despatches sent by these tubes backwards and forwards, letters are often sent, too; in fact, sometimes as many as 200 a day are thus received or despatched. The messages are enclosed in a case known as the "carrier," and, when all is ready, this "carrier," by pneumatic means, is sent at lightning speed to its destination. Two examples will show how rapidly this can be done.

I was informed by Mr. Millie that, when these tubes were first used, messages were often carried at a rate of one hundred miles an hour by the "carrier"; but in consequence of this great speed the "carrier" went against the "terminus of its course"—so to speak—or the other end of the pneumatic tube, with such force, that it was very frequently broken! Again, whilst I looked on, a message was sent in the "carrier" through one of these tubes, and an answer received from its destination. The ground covered by this despatch and its reply, in going from us and returning, was quite a quarter of a mile, yet the whole process, timed by us watch in hand, was only twelve seconds!

Another most interesting item in this veritable Chamber of Wonders is a new kind of telephone, especially useful for conversing with the men in signal-boxes. Of course, a vast amount of this kind of work is carried on from Liverpool Street telegraph department. In this new telephonic device there is no necessity for the person receiving a message to go up and put his ear close to the ear-tube of the telephone. There is, in connection with the wire, a wide tube, known as the "loud-speaking telephone," to a signal-box. When a telephone-message is sent, this tube shouts it out, so to speak, so that the signalman hears it without moving from his then position. It will at once be apparent how important and useful this device is if the signalman chances to be just engaged in a job he cannot immediately leave. As there is no "ringing up" required, no continual "calling," it will prove a most important adjunct in perfecting this division of the department's work.



THE CHIEF'S PRIVATE ROOM, WITH ITS MAP OF THE GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY SERVICES.

Of this new device, one is already fitted up, and I was informed that seven others were to be added almost immediately, as it had been such a success. It will, if widely

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adopted, certainly revolutionise this kind of telephonic work.

Nor would any description of this instrument room be complete which did not mention the work of the "whistling telephone." To me, personally, this was as interesting as any apparatus in the room. It is connected with the Great Eastern Railway Company's well-known station at Broxbourne, twenty miles from Liverpool Street, and goes to the signal-box there. On being set in motion it whistles sharply to the signalman, who is then all attention to the important message that is coming. The conveying-wire itself is actually the ordinary telegraph-wire, to which this other apparatus is connected.

The power to work all the electrical force required for such a system is got from 400 cells of bi-chromate, which are kept in a room on the platform, below the instrument room already described. Here men examine the cells, fill them, and keep them in order as required daily. Altogether this electrical department of the Great Eastern Railway Company keeps over sixty people regularly employed.

Next to the instrument room is a room which contains round its walls a series of shelves, fitted with doors in front, so as to form cupboards. In these cupboards are kept all the bundles of telegrams of every sort that daily pass through the other room. Order here, as everywhere else, is the predominant feature. Each shelf is divided into compartments, and to each compartment is allotted a date in due order, beginning at January 1 and ending December 31. All the telegrams received on any day, when finished with, are tied up neatly together and placed upon the shelf's compartment allotted to that day, so as to be ready for immediate reference at any moment. They are thus kept for twelve months, after which, if no question has been raised about them, they are destroyed. Thus there is no hurry, no confusion, in turning to any telegram required. The chief or his second can put his hand at once on any one telegram of the hundreds of thousands that have passed through the office during the preceding year, without the slightest hesitation, and produce it for your inspection in a minute or two.

Verily this telegraphic department is a wonderful place, and I thought, as I descended again into Bishopsgate Street, how few of the millions who pass it weekly have any conception of the remarkable work going on daily within the brick walls of Hamilton House.

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A LATE VISITOR.

By R. Ramsay.

Illustrated by Frances Ewan.

"I'M terrified, doctor!" said Mrs. Ind. She had tripped hurriedly up the steps of the doctor's house, which stood alone a little way down the street. Apparently she had run all the way from the bank, and was almost breathless, her colour coming and going, and her golden hair rather wild. She had a little black case in her arms and was absurdly hugging it.

The doctor regarded her gravely. He was a solemn young man, apt to look reproachful if his patients were only slightly ill. With dignity he put this patient a chair.

"And the symptoms——?" he had begun. Mrs. Ind laughed nervously.

"It's these rumours," she said, "about thieves and burglars. You don't know how frightened I have been lately; and the servants say—oh, doctor, pity me! With my husband away, and suspicious characters haunting the place, I am nearly frantic!"

The doctor looked puzzled, perhaps doubtful what he should prescribe for that.

"And so I came in this afternoon to bring my sapphires and put them in the bank. Imagine my state of mind, doctor—the bank was shut!"

She looked at him tragically, pausing. Outside the horses were jingling their harness, lifting their heads impatiently towards each other; the carriage had followed her down the street.

"It will be dark before I get home," said

"With dignity he put this patient a chair."

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Mrs. Ind piteously. "Think! the long, long, lonely drive, and then all night to be in terror about my sapphires. I cannot face it! Doctor, will you—will you let me leave them here? If not, I shall be grey with fright."

She thrust the black case into his hands with an excited gesture.

"Leave them here?" repeated the doctor uncomfortably.

"'Stir, and I shoot!' she cried."

"Please! You can run across with them to the bank directly it opens to-morrow morning; and you are so safe, living in the town, and your house such an unlikely place—so very safe altogether! Shut them up in that cupboard, behind the bottles."

Rather unwillingly he had to acquiesce. After all, it was only for a night. He took up the little black case that was so precious, and wrapped it in medicated cotton-wool till it was completely hidden. Then he put it on the highest shelf of his private cupboard, as the lady prayed him, behind the bottles.

She had driven away in a hurry, afraid that he might repent, and he shut the door after her with a new sense of responsibility.

"What was it?" called a young voice from the upper regions as he stood on the mat, reflecting. Peggy, sister, housekeeper, and dispenser, was leaning over the stairs. The doctor glanced up gravely.

"My patients," he said, "trust me not only with their lives, but—their sapphires."

Peggy came running down. She was a young thing with eager eyes, and although she had none of her brother's solemnity, the laughter in them was always frustrating her attempts to look staid. Just now her expression was all dismay.

"Oh!" she cried, "and if anybody were to break in?"

"We must risk it," said the doctor, smiling.

* * *

The night-bell had been ringing in Peggy's dreams.

She had heard it and half awakened; her brother had come along the passage hurriedly and called something through the keyhole; but the dreaming held her fast. It must have been a long while after that she started up and listened.

What was that?

Had Harold not gone out, after all? How was it, then, that she remembered the house-door's clang and the sound of wheels? She should have got up to see that he had all he wanted, and—heavens!—to bar the door. That must have been what he had called through the keyhole. Mrs. Ind's sapphires

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in their charge, and the house-door left on the latch!

Peggy sat up in bed conscience-stricken, reaching out for her dressing-gown and her stockings. It was pitch dark, but she felt a queer kind of hesitation in striking a match, as if that would make visible many terrors, all merged in the general eeriness of the dark.

Again! What was it?

She held her breath to listen. Surely, surely there was somebody in the house.

With a courage that ruled her beating pulses she sprang out of bed and dressed, feeling that she would be braver with all her clothes on. Then she ventured out on the landing. Leaning over the stairs she heard, surely, unmistakably, little noises far down below.

It was no use waking the maids on the upper landing. They were only two, an old woman and a young girl who had fits (it was the principal thing for which she had a character, and keenly interested her master), and they would only add their shrieks. Peggy turned quickly into her brother's room. As she thought, it was empty. What would she not have given to hear a powerful snore? The bed was not even rumpled; he had been sitting up late, and the summons must have surprised him on his way up. And then it struck her—what if it had been a false alarm to get him out of the way?

There was an old pistol in the room that the doctor played with occasionally, shooting bottles in the back yard; and Peggy had learnt to fire it. She took it up now and charged it, betwixt fright and laughter, and then, like a ghost, but in a very unghostly panic, slid down the stairs.

The hall lamp was out, black out. Peggy felt her way across to the door, and passed her hand up and down. It was only latched. Her fingers were turning the key, and mechanically feeling to find the bar, when a thought arrested her. *Who* might she be barring in?

A subdued rustle reached her from the doctor's study; it was queer and threatening, because unaccountable. And with it another sound, horribly like the tread of a man.

Peggy was an audacious young woman, and had always been famed in the family for her pluck. A little minute passed while she was standing there listening—and shaking. Then she stumbled forward in the darkness, past the glistening hall chairs and an oak chest that was terribly in the way, and flung open the study door.

The lamp was lit. It glimmered dangerously in the eyes of a man—a stranger.

Peggy had not guessed till then how sure she had been that, after all, it was only the cat—or Harold. She was dumb with fright.

At her appearance he had jumped up, confounded. He was tall and dark and powerful; a man who could crush her with a finger; but—but—she had the pistol. She lifted it quickly. It might be a matter of life and death, and—if she were not dauntless——!

"Stir, and I shoot!" she cried.

He looked at her: it was a measuring glance that might carry the fate of either. Peggy braved it with a high front and her little shaking finger at the trigger. Then she saw his eyes twinkle amusedly and there was a sudden smile at his mouth.

"Do you think I am a burglar?" he asked.

"I do," Peggy answered stoutly.

"But—but—I assure you——"

He smiled at her as if the accusation were too absurd to be entertained for a minute; his manner was very gentlemanly, more amused than embarrassed. Peggy saw then that he was better dressed than one would expect in a burglar; good-looking, reckless, and rather careworn. At least he was not a ruffian. A queer little impulse of pity moved her to say—

"If you will go away quietly, I—I will not call the police."

He made no sign of willingness to accept her offer. Rather it appeared to amuse him more than her threatening attitude with the pistol.

"Will you not allow me to explain?" he asked.

Peggy looked at him sternly. She was not much afraid of him just at present. Only she must not let herself think and tremble.

"What are you doing here?" she said. "Who are you?"

"Has your brother—you are Miss Ryder?—never spoken to you of Jack Lancaster?"

Peggy shook her head.

"It looks black, then," he said, with another twinkle. "But the fact is, I'm an old college chum of his, and happening to be travelling this way I thought I'd pay him a surprise visit. The last train, you know, gets in here at about eleven."

It was glib, but the housekeeper shook her head again, unbelieving.

"Harold would have wakened me," she said. "There would have been a room to get ready."

"I wouldn't have anybody called up," said he. "Ryder said I could share his room, and asked me to go up and take possession. But he was sent for half-an-hour ago, and I said I would sit up till he came in."

Peggy's eyes wandered doubtfully about the room. The fire was smouldering, dim and red; the doctor's slippers were flung, as usual, inside the fender. His pipe lay on the mantelpiece beside another, an unfamiliar one; perhaps, after all, it was true. As she wondered her eyes fell lower, and she saw a strange array on the table. Three silver mugs and a flagon were glittering in a row. The stranger saw her quick glance.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed, "she thinks I was packing up his 'Varsity trophies to make off with."

That frank explanation and his look of comical despair disarmed the girl at last. What would Harold say when he came and heard how she had treated his college chum? She threw up her hands in consternation.

"Oh!" she cried, "what am I to do? How can I apologise?"

"Don't!" he said. "I'm willing to admit that it was suspicious, and I'm greatly obliged to you for not insisting on marching me off to prison." He laughed, the joke of the thing apparently striking him far more than its awkward side. Peggy wondered amazedly at herself that she could ever have taken him for a burglar. She was very full of remorse.

"I'm so sorry," she said, looking at him with an eager longing to make amends. "What can I do to make you comfortable?"

"It's all right," said Mr. Lancaster. "With your permission I will just sit here and smoke till Ryder comes in. Please go up again, and don't bother about me. Leave me in charge of the house and—the sapphires."

Peggy started.

"I don't wonder you were anxious," he said, with a smile. "Ryder was just telling me about it when he was knocked up and had to go. They seemed to be weighing upon his mind, too, and he asked me most solemnly to keep an eye on them. He forgot to say where they were, though, so how am I to guard them? Are they in here?"

"Yes," said Peggy faintly.

Mr. Lancaster surveyed the room carelessly.

"All right," he said. "Then am I to guard that cupboard? But, look here, Miss Ryder, you really must go back to bed and leave me at my post."

His tone was kind and authoritative, as anyone might address a wan little weary person who ought to be sent to bed. Peggy reddened, and wondered again at her past unbelief.

"Is there nothing I can do first?" she asked wistfully. "Don't you want something to eat or drink? Did you have any supper?"

"I—I believe we hadn't," he answered. "We were so glad to see each other, and just sat talking; and then Ryder was called out in such a hurry. I said I'd forage—— Oh, pray, don't trouble!"

However, Peggy had already disappeared into the kitchen.

The fire in the range was still alight; it had been left so to keep a kettle warm for the doctor. She thrust a bit of kindling wood into it until it lit all the kitchen, and, although terribly afraid of rats, tucked her skirts tight round her and ventured gallantly into the larder. Finally she came back laden to the guest in the doctor's study.

"You should not; you really should not," he said, coming forward to help her to put down the things she carried. With indiscriminate hospitality she had fetched ham and cold beef, and a leg of mutton that was unhappily still uncooked. Mr. Lancaster laughed, and she laughed, as they both looked at this proof of her bewilderment, and then she fled and brought in a cheese. It was a huge one in a china dish, and the guest cleared the silver cups off the table to make room, arranging them almost affectionately along the mantelpiece.

"They are pleasant reminders," he said, with a little sigh, "of ancient triumphs and the old days at Cambridge."

Peggy was standing at the table with a loaf she was bringing. She let it fall suddenly. It was very simple. He had said *Cambridge*.

The doctor was an Oxford man.

That little slip had been fatal. True, the inscription on the silver mug he was handling referred to a Cambridge triumph, but it had not been won by Harold: it was a relic of a cousin who had gone to fight fever in Africa and left it in his keeping. Peggy watched him with an appalling conviction in her soul. Coming so close upon the relief of the past few minutes, this revelation made her feel all unstrung. She put out a hand to support herself at the table, and her eyes grew large with fear.

He had taken up one of the smaller mugs, and she thought he started.

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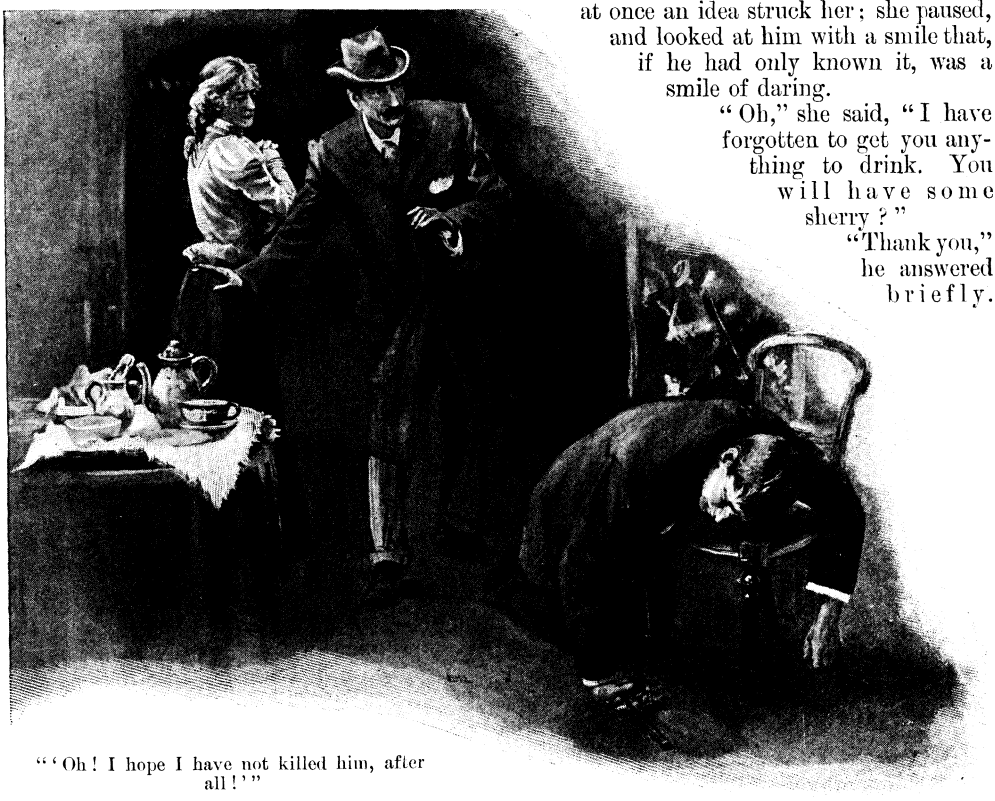
"I tried both 'Varsities, you must know, Miss Ryder, and I'm afraid neither was very proud of me. I was always a lazy chap."

The wonderful readiness of the man! He turned carelessly from the mantelpiece and began to finger the doctor's pistol. (If she had only kept it instead of rashly flinging it on the table!)

With her heart in her mouth Peggy watched him. He was examining the thing with an air of amused disdain, probably finding it rickety, and also, she thought, debating. She saw him glance up quickly at the place where Mrs. Ind's sapphires had been put, and she believed she could understand why the same glance should fall on her. He was making up his mind.



"'Oh! I hope I have not killed him, after all!'"

"If you're sure you have all you want," she said quickly, "I will say 'Good night.'"

And she saw his look of relief. He took a step towards her and put out his hand.

"*Good* night," he said.

In a despairing flash Peggy realised what her retreat would mean. It would save her own life perhaps—she could see past the smile in these determined eyes—but after that it meant ruin. The sapphires had been trusted to them; their disappearance would always be a haunting slur on the doctor, if nothing worse than that. Friends might disbelieve—enemies would accuse them. There would just be her halting story, a tale of cowardice at the best. And then Mrs. Ind's despair——!

"There is no light in the hall," he said, deliberately, as she fancied. "You had better leave this door ajar."

And she knew that she would not be allowed to escape and give the alarm. Had he guessed what was in her mind? All at once an idea struck her; she paused, and looked at him with a smile that, if he had only known it, was a smile of daring.

"Oh," she said, "I have forgotten to get you anything to drink. You will have some sherry?"

"Thank you," he answered briefly.

"I—I never drink anything stronger than tea."

Peggy was not to be beaten.

"Then you will have that," she said. "I can hear the kettle singing. I will make you a cup of tea."

"Don't trouble," he said rather impatiently.

"It will not take a minute," said Peggy kindly. Courage was returning to her with a chance of action, and she was able to play her part. Her impetuous hospitality reassured him; he did not try to arrest her as

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she vanished, leaving the study door wide open. If he were to follow her all would be lost, but he did not. He could hear from where he was standing if she unbarred one of the outer doors or slid up a window.

In the kitchen she caught up a teapot and emptied into it an extravagant heap of tea; then she bent over the kettle, and there was a reassuring sound of pouring water. The man in the doctor's study could not fail to hear it. When there was about a cupful of water in the teapot she put on the lid, and with a quick motion set a jug under the boiler and turned the tap. Then, while the noise of pouring went on uninterruptedly, she darted across the kitchen—across the passage.

There was hardly a clink in the surgery as she searched among the bottles. She was back again in an instant. The light had gone out in her hand as she crossed the hall in a breathless hurry, but something she was bringing with her glimmered in the flickering darkness of the kitchen. With her hand on the teapot she paused, and, shrinking on the brink of the Rubicon, peered fearfully out of the darkness towards the lamp-lit study. By an effort she lifted the teapot and walked steadily, quickly in.

"I will pour out a cup," she said, "and you must drink it—you really must."

He took it from her hands and drank it, swallowing it hot, with an unwilling haste. As he put down the cup she rose.

"And now," she said, "good night!"

He watched her up the stairs. She knew it. From where he was standing he could see the far-away flutter of her skirt, higher and higher as she disappeared; and she walked up lightly, humming a little, high scrap of song. But as soon as she reached the turn of the stairs she paused, and, shutting the nearest door with a bang, leaned over the banisters and listened.

Would he find out the trick? Would she hear his angry tread and his voice, quick and dangerous, warning her of the punishment she must reap? Or would nothing happen? It was a risk; she had known it when the idea came, and she had faced it desperately. A minute—another minute. She hardly knew whether it was the clock on the stairs or her own heart beating. With it the silence was getting awful.

Ah, what was that? A faint attempt at movement, a stumble, and then a fall?

Peggy waited until she could stand the hush no longer and then went creeping down the stair. It was taking her life in her hand, but still——

The light was still as high in the study, but all the room was curiously still, and something strange was lying half on the floor, half across a chair! It had happened!

Peggy halted, triumphant, and yet terror-stricken, gazing at her work. If she had killed him? But no, no, surely—her hand had been almost steady.

She came a little nearer. His head lay against the chair; his dark hair was ruffled as he had fallen.

At that sight triumph had altogether the upper hand. She turned to rush out into the street and alarm the nearest houses, to bring men to carry the burglar away to prison; and just then she heard the doctor's key at the door.

He was almost overturned by her eager rush, and her wild, white face was as startling to him as a ghost's.

"Why——" he gasped. "Peggy—Peggy!" and his solemn young countenance lost its professional gravity. She almost dragged him into the study.

"It's a burglar," she said. "He broke in to steal the sapphires. And I wasn't sure that he hadn't murdered you! and, oh! Harold, it has been awful! But I gave him some of that new stuff; you said it took effect very quickly—just enough to make him—to make him sleep. Oh! I hope I have not killed him, after all!"

The doctor could not understand half her speech, any more than Peggy had understood what he had called to her through the key-hole before he started; but he saw the prostrate figure and gave a jump. He dropped on his knees by the burglar.

"Great Scott! Peggy, what have you done to Jack——?"

To that heroine the next minutes were years of interminable remorse. Harold's reproaches she could bear proudly, conscious of the best intentions, but not the sight of that still, still figure.

She shrank into a corner, telling herself that she had murdered him, and that it would haunt her always—that she would never smile again all her life; and the tears were bitter and imminent in her eyes.

But at last with shaking and care he wakened. He raised himself a little, saw the doctor's horrified face, and laughed. To Peggy that laugh was the most beautiful sound in all the world.

He turned to her. In his look there was fun and forgiveness, and more than that—

"Will you shake hands, Miss Peggy? I—I admire your pluck."

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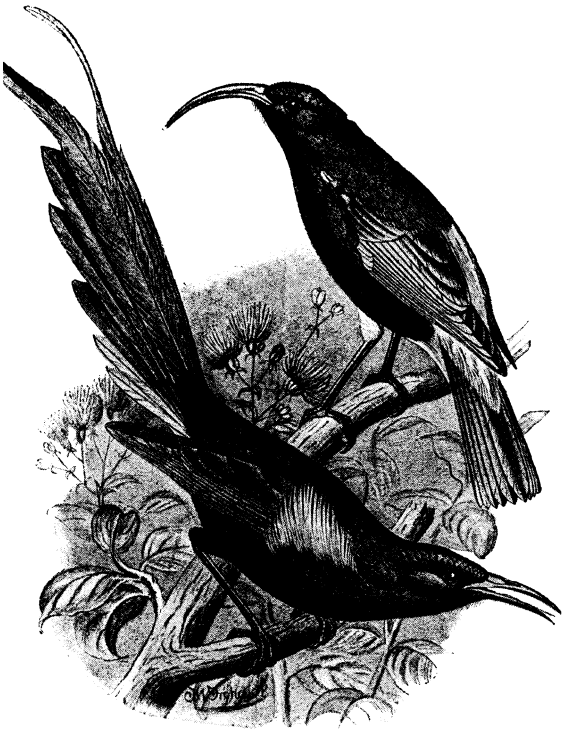

THE ROYAL BIRDS OF THE SANDWICH ISLANDS.

THE RARE FEATHER-WORK OF HAWAII.

By Miller Christy, F.L.S.

IT is not often that the native products of savage or semi-savage races are remarkable for artistic beauty, however curious and interesting they may be. Among such products the magnificent feather-work formerly produced by the natives of the Hawaiian, or Sandwich, Islands may be assigned a very high—indeed, the very highest—place. It consisted of feather plumes, of feather-covered helmets and dance-masks, of wreaths and tippets, and, above all, of gorgeous cloaks (called *mamos* in the Hawaiian language) covered with the feathers of brightly coloured native birds. These cloaks, which were worn only by the kings and highest chiefs, are as truly beautiful as anything modern art can produce. All the earlier visitors to the Hawaiian Group mention them, for they were too striking to escape attention. Cook, who, in 1778, was the first to visit the Islands, was received by the natives with all the ceremony and adoration which they thought due to him as a god, and their chiefs presented him with several feather-covered cloaks and helmets, which they regarded as their most priceless treasures. In Bartolozzi's well-known engraving, "The Death of Captain Cook," published in 1782, four of the natives are represented wearing cloaks (with very little else!) and two wear helmets—all drawn, doubtless, from the examples brought home by Cook's Expedition and now in the British Museum. The dagger used by the cloaked native shown in the act of stabbing Cook in the back was one of eight which Cook had presented to the king (Kamehameha I.) in exchange for a cloak. Most, if not all, of the other cloaks now in England were given or sent by the old kings and chiefs of Hawaii as presents on some (to them) highly important occasion. Thus, in March, 1810, the then king sent, as a royal present to King George IV., a fine cloak, which is still at Windsor. Another fine example, now in the museum at Saffron Walden, was brought

HAWAIIAN FEATHER CLOAK.
In the British Museum.

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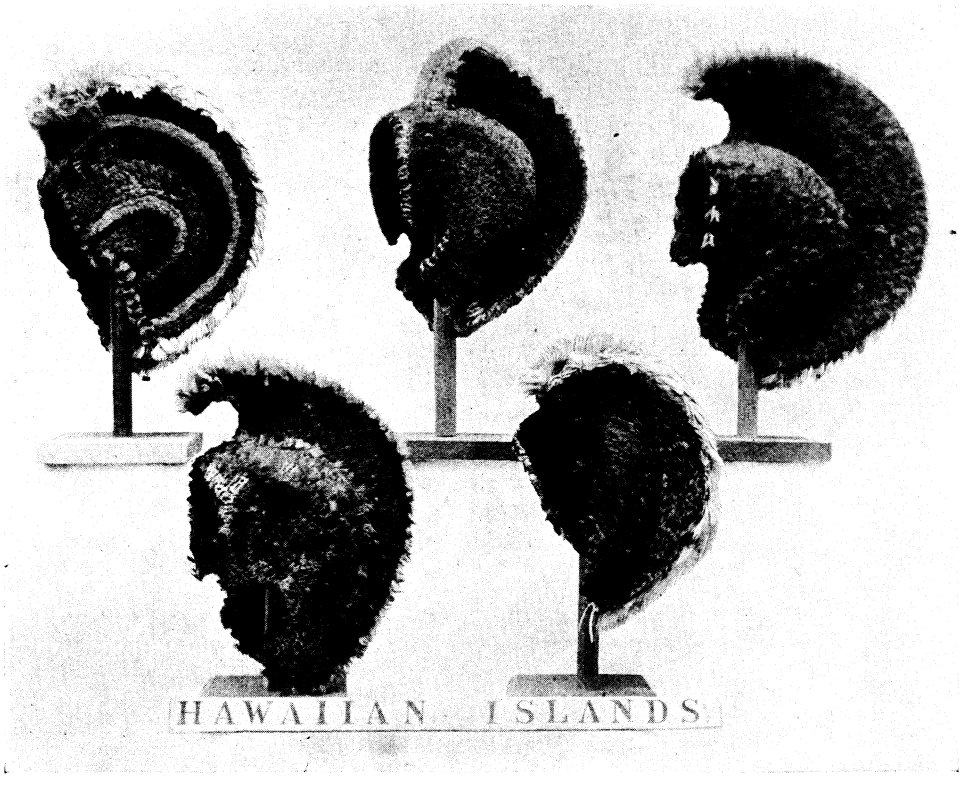
to this country by King Lhio-Lhio, who, in 1824, came with his queen to England to seek British protection for his country. Both died of the measles whilst here, and the king, just before his own death, presented this cloak, as his most valued personal possession, to the Hon. F. Byng, who had been appointed by George IV. to attend him. So highly, indeed, were the cloaks valued in Hawaii that very seldom has one been allowed to leave the Islands as a result of purchase. It is, however, to be feared that most highly prized in the manufacture has become extinct. The few specimens which have found their way to Europe are, therefore, now among the most highly prized treasures in leading public and private museums.

The making of cloaks and other feather-covered articles of dress or ornament dates, doubtless, from a very remote period in the history of the Islands. It formed, in bygone days, the principal occupation of the wives and daughters of the Hawaiian nobles. The ancient kings had a regular staff of



FEATHER HELMETS.
In the British Museum.

in many cases the recipient thought very lightly of a gift which the donor regarded as of value inestimable. It is even said that one fine cloak, brought home by a traveller in the early years of this century, was stored by him in a lumber-room and used by his little grand-daughter when "playing at queens!"

Though once fairly abundant in Hawaii, specimens of this splendid feather-work are now very scarce there and more highly prized than ever; for not only has the art of making it been lost, but the bird whose feathers were skilled feather-hunters, who were very expert in their vocation. In capturing the birds, a net or snare was sometimes used, but more often a kind of bird-lime, made from the sticky juice of the bread-fruit tree or from the gum of the fragrant olapa (*Cheirodendron gaudichaudii*), which was smeared on the higher branches of the trees frequented by the birds or on long poles set up on purpose. Often a living specimen of a brilliant scarlet bird, known as the iiwi, was fastened in the vicinity to act as a lure. It is said that the hunters sometimes even transplanted strange

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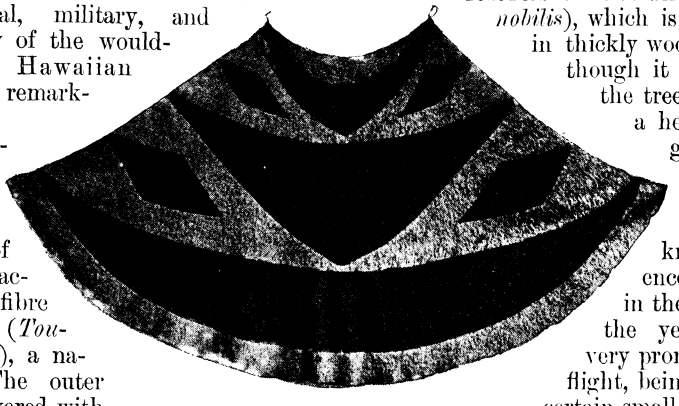
trees to the heart of the forest in order to excite the birds' curiosity. These old bird-catchers must have been important men among the Hawaiians, for feathers were considered to exceed in value any other kind of personal property, and the king's taxes were often paid in them. Without doubt the use of feathers had, to some extent, a religious significance. One writer says that, early in this century, five yellow feathers of the "royal bird" (which is all that one bird would produce) were accounted equal in value to a piece of nankeen which was sold for a dollar and a half. This would probably represent at least a pound of our money now. Leaving out of account the immense difficulty of obtaining sufficient of the particular feathers used, the time, skill, and labour expended upon the manufacture of each cloak must have been enormous. These facts, and the beauty of the finished article, account for the great value formerly attached to the cloaks in Hawaii. Still, the extent to which feathers have become associated with the religious, social, military, and political history of the would-be-feathered Hawaiian race is very remarkable.

STATUE OF KAMEHAMEHA I., "THE NAPOLEON OF HAWAII," AT HONOLULU.

The groundwork of all the feather-work is a coarse netting, made of string manufactured from the fibre of the olona (*Touchardia latifolia*), a native grass. The outer side is alone covered with feathers, the shafts of which are so dexterously and closely interwoven into, or sewn on to, the fabric of the net, that the feathers, which overlap one another, present a surface as smooth and glossy as the back of a living bird.



CLOAK OF KING LIHO-LIHO, OF HAWAII.
Now in the Museum at Saffron Walden.

Of the birds which provided the feathers from which this work was made, the mamo-bird (*Drepanis pacifica*), already mentioned, claims the first notice. About the size of our starling, its plumage was in the main black, the few brilliant orange-yellow feathers surrounding the tail being alone used. Its extermination has doubtless been brought about by the numbers taken for the sake of these few feathers. Not more than five or six skins of this bird are now known to exist. There is no specimen in our national collection, but there are single examples in museums at Vienna, Paris, Honolulu, and Cambridge, and two in that of the Hon. Walter Rothschild at Tring Park. The only articles wholly made from its feathers now known to exist in Europe are two small tippets, one in the British Museum, the other in the possession of Lord Brassey.

The other "royal bird" providing yellow feathers is the oo-bird (*Acrulocerus nobilis*), which is still common in thickly wooded districts, though it builds among the tree-tops at such a height from the ground that its nest and eggs are still quite unknown to science. It also is in the main black, the yellow, though very prominent during flight, being restricted to certain small tufts beneath the wings. King Kamehameha I. is said to have ordered that, after these yellow tufts had been plucked, the birds were to be set free. Its light yellow feathers are infinitely more

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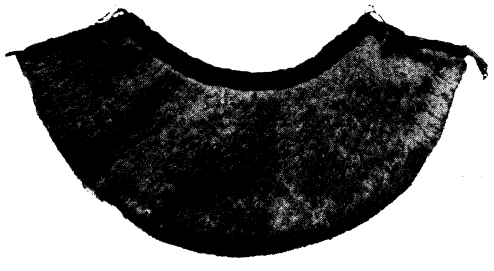
abundant in the feather-work than the more beautiful golden feathers of the mamo.

The red feathers which form a prominent feature in nearly all Hawaiian feather-work are taken from the iiwi (*Vestiaria coccinea*), perhaps the commonest and most conspicuous bird of Hawaii. Its name occurs frequently in native songs relating ancient deeds of heroism. The adult male wears a gorgeous livery of brilliant vermilion, but the young bird sports a dress of very sober, quakerly tints, which probably account for its abundance in spite of the immense numbers formerly killed.

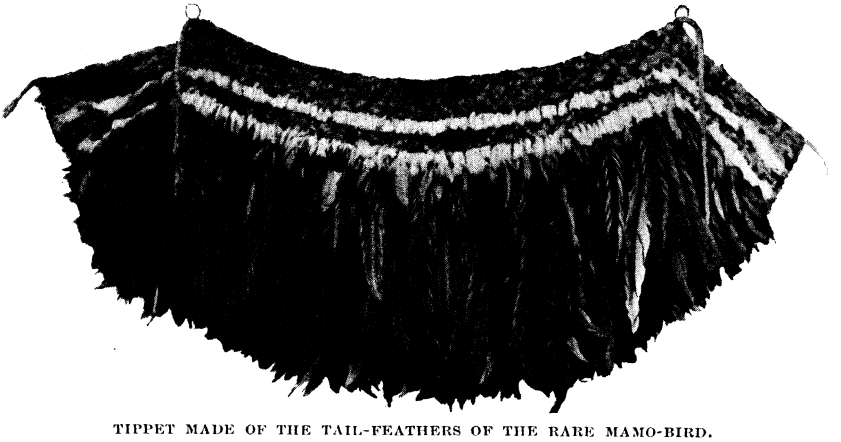
The green feathers sometimes used (though only one cloak chiefly made with them now exists) are derived from the ou-bird (*Psittacirostra psittacea*), a parrot-like grosbeak, about the size of our greenfinch, with a bright yellow head and green back and breast.



FEATHER TIPPET.
In the British Museum.

Though not remarkably abundant, it is a well-known and conspicuous bird in Hawaii.

The cloaks already mentioned were by far the most striking products of the Hawaiian feather-workers. Though often spoken of as "royal cloaks," only those made solely from the brilliant orange-hued feathers of the now extinct mamo-bird (*Drepanis pacifica*) can be properly so described. The right to wear cloaks made from the feathers of this "royal bird" was the exclusive prerogative of the king. To all others yellow was, in the native language, *tabu*—whence comes our word "tabooed." A yellow cloak was a veritable "cloth of gold"; and, when worn with a helmet of the same colour, it formed a garb of truly royal magnificence. Only one or two such cloaks are known ever to have been made. The chief of these, and the only one still existing, was the great state robe and war cloak of King Kamehameha I., "the Napoleon of Hawaii," who first obtained mastery over all the Islands of the group and consolidated them into one kingdom under his own rule. He is the national hero of Hawaii, and his statue, which stands in front of the Government buildings at Honolulu, represents him wearing a feathered-covered helmet and attired in his royal *mamo*, the texture of which has been admirably reproduced by the sculptor's chisel. This cloak, which was made up from the smaller tippets of inferior chiefs, is fifty-six inches and a half in length down the back and twelve feet four inches in circumference round the skirt. It is said to have continued to increase through eight preceding reigns, as each succeeding monarch added something to its size. With the exception of a very



TIPPET MADE OF THE TAIL-FEATHERS OF THE RARE MAMO-BIRD.
In the British Museum.

FEATHER TIPPET.
In the British Museum.

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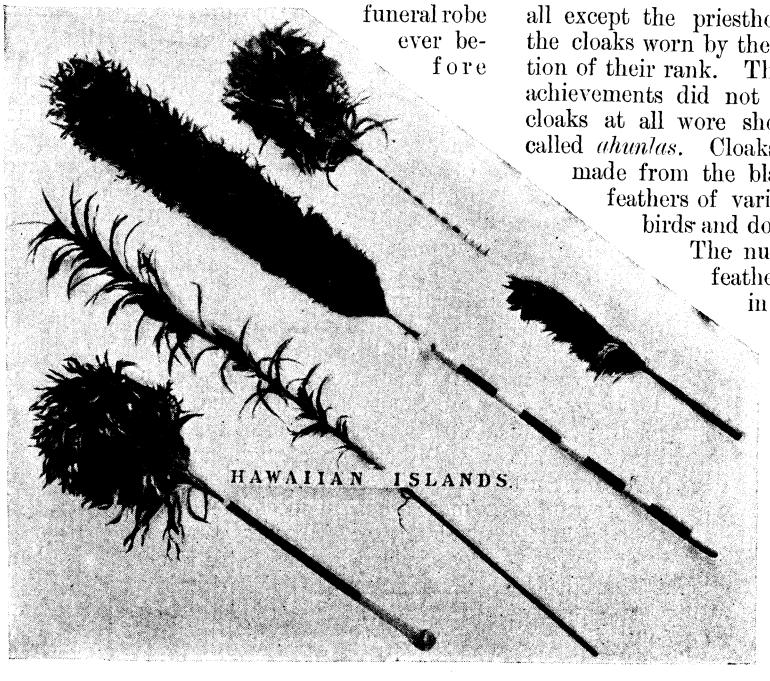
FEATHER-COVERED DANCE-MASK.
In the British Museum.

narrow border of red feathers, it is wholly of the brilliant yellow feathers of the extinct mamo-bird. To the old Hawaiians its value was beyond computation.

Another royal cloak was that buried with King Lunalilo, the last descendant of King Kamehameha, who died in 1872, having reigned but one year. His people, in order to mark their affection for him and extreme grief for his death, made of his royal *mamo* a shroud, and in it they buried him. To them, undoubtedly, it represented value as great as that of the costliest funeral robe ever before worn by a dead monarch.

The *mamos* worn by chiefs were covered with the feathers of commoner birds, chiefly red and yellow, but the yellow was that of the oo, not of the mamo. The two colours are usually arranged in simple curved or angular patterns, showing considerable poverty of design. According to one writer, the use of red cloaks was *tabu* to all except the priesthood. The length of the cloaks worn by the chiefs was an indication of their rank. Those whose position or achievements did not entitle them to wear cloaks at all wore short capes or tippets, called *ahunlas*. Cloaks were also sometimes made from the black, purple, or white feathers of various other native wild birds and domestic fowls.

FEATHER-COVERED DANCE-MASK.
In the British Museum.



FEATHER PLUMES.
In the British Museum.

The number of birds whose feathers would be required in the manufacture of each cloak was enormous, but it is difficult to gain anything but an approximate idea of the number. We may take it that, in the case of royal cloaks, the feathers of ten birds would, on an average, be required for each square inch. As the area of a medium-sized cloak may be taken at from fifteen to twenty square

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feet, it will be found that from 20,000 to 30,000 birds would be required to make each. This will explain the enormous sum —over £20,000—at which the cloak buried with King Lunalilo was said to be valued. Little wonder is it, therefore, that at least one species has been exterminated. Clearly fashion in dress causing wholesale destruction of bird-life is not confined to civilised races or to either sex!

Next to the cloaks, the most remarkable feather-covered objects produced were large helmets, called *maholis*. In shape, these were not inartistic, closely resembling those worn by the ancient Greeks. The frame is of wicker-work, over which is stretched feather-covered network. Less remarkable, but equally imposing, were the long-handled feather plumes (originally, no doubt, fly-whisks), called *kahilis*, which were borne before the king and his highest chiefs, as insignia of rank and as banners in war. Their long wooden handles were generally ornamented with pieces of tortoise-shell and whale-tooth ivory. When, in time of war, the march was stayed at any place, these *kahilis*, fixed in the ground, marked the temporary stopping-place of the king or leader. At the burial of the last of the Kamehamehas, seventy-six of these *kahilis* were borne in the funeral train by Hawaiian nobles; and, when the obsequies were over, one was set up on either side of the entrance to the tomb. Other feather-covered objects manufactured were the dance-masks, huge heads constructed on a wicker frame and having superlatively hideous features—a mouth stretching from ear to ear, armed with several rows of sharks' teeth, and great goggle-eyes of mother-of-pearl.

When the Hawaiians adopted the dress of civilisation, their monarchs still continued to wear the royal *mamo* of the great King Kamehameha at their coronations; and at the opening of parliament and other state ceremonies it was spread over the throne as a symbol of the royal power. Now, it is preserved as a priceless national relic closely associated with the past history of the Hawaiian people. Nor does the former use of this unique royal robe seem likely soon to be forgotten. So lately as the year 1888, two native nobles wore their *mamos* at the opening of the Hawaiian Legislature; while the Honolulu volunteers have adopted, as part of their uniform, capes of yellow cloth in imitation of the *mamo*. Moreover, the design on the red five-cent Hawaiian postage stamp at present in use, as well as that on the black twenty-five cent stamp in the issue of 1883, depict the national hero, attired in his *mamo* and helmet, exactly as represented on his statue already mentioned.

In 1887, the Jubilee present from the then Queen of Hawaii to Queen Victoria of England consisted of the royal monograms and coats-of-arms of both, beautiful worked together in red and yellow feathers.

Naturally, the finest series of Hawaiian feather-work is still to be found in Hawaii. The Bishop Museum at Honolulu contains, besides all the royal robes, a large collection of *kahilis* and other objects. Such specimens as remain in the hands of natives are still so highly prized by them that few travellers care to give the prices asked.

By far the finest collection existing elsewhere is that in the British Museum, where may be seen several helmets, *kahilis*, tippets, dance-masks, and other objects, including three cloaks. One of the latter is made with the long black feathers of some bird like the domestic fowl, and is, apparently, one of those drawn by Bartolozzi; another, an extremely fine one of red and yellow, nearly six feet in length, was presented by a king of Hawaii to Sir H. Chamberlayne.

In the Royal Museum at Windsor there are, beside several small tippets, three fine cloaks of red and yellow, with small spots or edges of black. One of these is, doubtless, that presented to George IV. in 1810.

Among examples in private possession, perhaps the best known is that which belonged to the late Lady Brassey. A finer one, nearly six feet in length, and believed to have been brought home by a member of Cook's Expedition, is, however, in the possession of Mr. T. H. Kelly, of Kingston-upon-Thames. Others belong to Mr. F. W. Lucas, of Tooting, and to Miss Starbuck, of Bath.

The immense values set upon these cloaks in Hawaii has already been alluded to. It is difficult to state their present value with us. Hawaiian feather cloaks are not quoted on the Stock Exchange, and cannot be said to have a regular market value, being too scarce and costly to change hands except on the rarest occasions. Still, as the scarcest and most beautiful specimens of savage art, their value is certainly very great. Lady Brassey's specimen, when exhibited at one of the South Kensington Exhibitions, was insured for no less than £10,000; but this was without question enormously above its real value. Until some further "operations" in feather cloaks are recorded we must be content merely to estimate their value.

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AN HISTORIC ISLAND:

NAPOLEON'S LAST HOME AS IT APPEARS TO-DAY.

By R. G. Ellis.

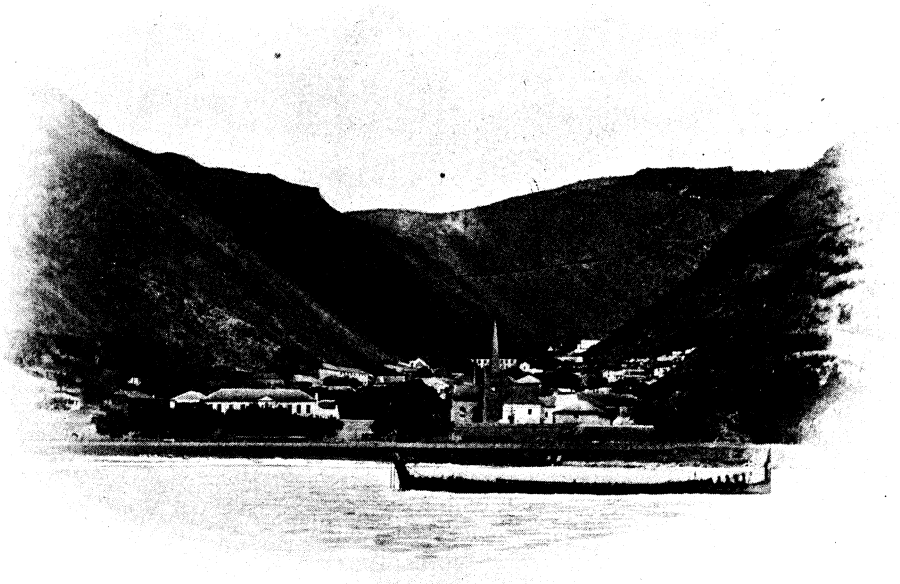
DISTANT about a week's steaming from Capetown by an intermediate Union or Castle liner is one of the smallest, yet by no means the least interesting, possessions of our huge Empire. Dimly on the distant horizon appears the shadowy form of the once island-prison of Napoleon, and as the outline grows clearer one cannot wonder at the melancholy which overtook the Imperial prisoner.

The island rises sheer out of the sea, easily showing its volcanic origin, and, until the little cleft in the wall of rock becomes clear enough to discover the only roadstead, appears dreariest of dwelling places.

As the incoming vessel draws nearer, the confused bundle of vegetation and masonry at the mouth of the cleft takes more definite shape. Peeping out of abundant foliage is the little church spire, backed by a toy castle and completely shut in by the cosiest-looking and most old-fashioned of dwellings.

No sooner has the gun announced the arrival of the mails, and the anchor been sent overboard, than the vessel is surrounded by a crowd of shouting and gesticulating boatmen, who, after making up their loads, leisurely pull for shore, not forgetting—midway on the journey—to demand double fare of their helpless victims.

What changes must the island have witnessed! In 1501 the Portuguese discovered it, but Dutchmen, the great colonisers of those days, were the first to make effective occupation. "John Company," seeing its value as a port of call for his India traders, soon managed to gain possession; and though temporarily obliged to return the conquest to its original owners, was at length reinstated and finally fixed in possession by charter of his Gracious Majesty King Charles II. As our Indian trade increased, so by leaps and bounds grew the prosperity of this fortunate little island. In those halcyon days many a well-paid official and comfortable trader enjoyed the equable climate and delightful



JAMESTOWN, THE CAPITAL OF ST. HELENA, FROM THE ANCHORAGE.
Photo by A. L. Innes, Jamestown.

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produce of St. Helena. Almost daily a passing ship would call, its sailors would run on shore for a spree, and doubtless give to the Jamestown police a little more work than now seems to fall to their lot. What business, too, for the inhabitants! Fresh water to be carted; coffee, fruit, vegetables, and meat for sale—and all at prices to satisfy the most exacting. And now? "Well, sir, we are lucky if five ships worth having call inside of the month." Trade and prosperity received a sudden and final blow by the opening of the Suez Canal, diverting as this did the course of every vessel of importance.

NAPOLEON'S TOMB, ST. HELENA.
Photo by A. L. Innes, Jamestown.

But the interest St. Helena has for most people lies in the fact that it was for the six years after Waterloo the prison of Napoleon. The Emperor, who died in 1821, was buried close to Longwood, the small estate assigned to him by the English Government, on which he had dragged out six weary years of existence under the watchful eye of Sir Hudson Lowe and his soldiers. In after years the Emperor's remains were removed to Paris, and there placed, with great pomp, in the magnificent tomb that had been prepared for their reception. The house and estate of Longwood were afterwards purchased by the French nation, whose representative now resides there as a protector of all that remains to tell of its great hero's sad days of exile.

Dinizulu and his uncles, the Zulu chiefs who caused so much anxiety to the Government in the succession disputes in Zululand, were kept in the island for some time. They have recently been allowed to return to their own country, as all fear of rebellion is now supposed to be over.

Jamestown, the capital, contains rather more than half the total number of the island's inhabitants. Like many of our old-fashioned English villages, it consists chiefly of one long, straggling street, whose half-ruinous, whitewashed cottages—too many tenantless—and general look of squalor sadly contrast with the memories of a prosperous and busy past. The people are a happy-go-lucky, shiftless lot, a much interbred mixture of all the races—Dutch, English, Negro, and others—who have ever had a home on the island. Their plentiful strain of African blood keeps them eternally cheerful and merry, and though the adult portion of the population is atrociously idle, the children and young women gaily skip about, offering to visitors little baskets of fruit, photographs of the Emperor's tomb, bits of crude embroidery, or necklaces and

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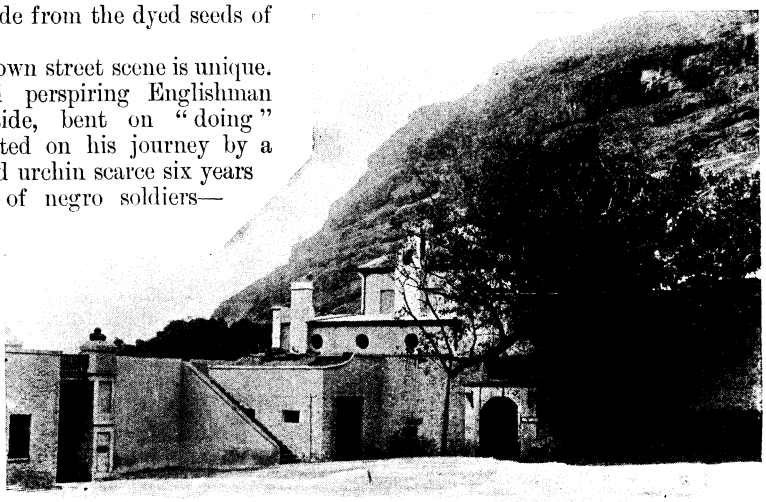
waistbelts prettily made from the dyed seeds of the water-melon.

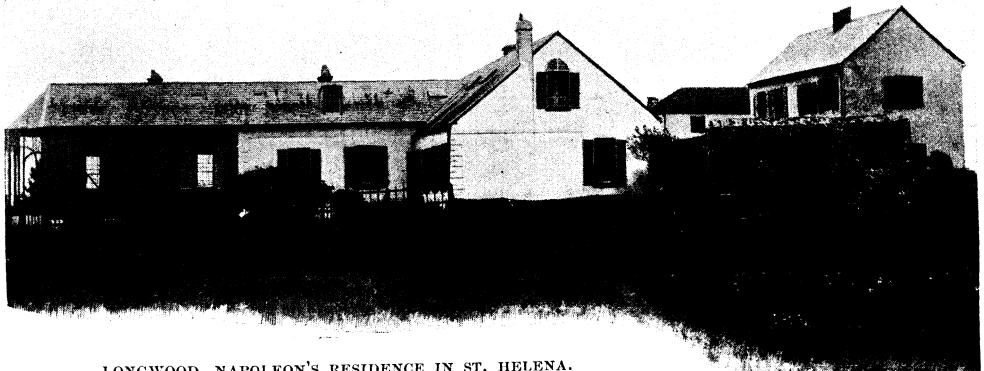
In its way a Jamestown street scene is unique. Watch that fat and perspiring Englishman toiling up the hillside, bent on "doing" everything, and piloted on his journey by a diminutive and ragged urchin scarce six years old. Next a group of negro soldiers—West India regiment—proudly strut along, twirling their little canes and rakishly shaking from side to side the long tassels on their quaint headgear. Shortly afterwards a couple of Khaki-clad "Tommies" from the Artillery barracks pass by, not at all too self-absorbed to reply to the broad sarcasms of the dusky beauties sunning themselves in every open doorway.



THE CASTLE, JAMESTOWN, NOW USED AS THE GOVERNOR'S TOWN RESIDENCE.

With so beautiful a climate it is not to be wondered that the island has attracted occasional health-seeking wanderers; in fact, more people than is generally supposed have good reason to bless the thought that landed them at St. Helena. Many a weak-lunged traveller has taken a newer and more vigorous lease of life under this sunny South Atlantic sky.

Recent events seem to show that the English Government has at length recognised the potential value of St. Helena as a port of call and coaling station. One must imagine the Suez Canal blocked—no improbable chance in a European war—fully to realise the importance of this halting place on the way to our immense possessions in the Far East. The island is not unprotected: modern fortifications, with heavy guns, have been constructed in the rocks around the harbour and are even now being added to. It is said to be the intention of the Admiralty to store up a quantity of coal and supplies. In the island are quartered several companies of the West India regiment, with small drafts from the Artillery and Engineers. It is expected that cable communication will shortly be established both with Capetown and the Mother Country, at last bringing an important outpost into touch with fighting headquarters. With wars and rumours of wars, the day may not be far distant when we shall again hear of this forgotten little island, on which, by one of the chances of fate, in years gone by, the eyes of all Europe were turned.



LONGWOOD, NAPOLEON'S RESIDENCE IN ST. HELENA.

Napoleon died in the room with the two shuttered windows immediately beneath the attic window.

Photos by A. L. Innes, Jamestown.

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"CAPTAIN BORIS WAS TELLING A STORY WITH A COUNTENANCE MORE THAN ORDINARILY GRAVE."

See "Joan of the Sword," page 736.

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JOAN OF THE SWORD.

By S. R. Crockett.*

Illustrated by Frank Richards.

SYNOPSIS OF FOREGOING CHAPTERS.

In the preceding chapters we are introduced to the Duchess Joan of Hohenstein, in Castle Kernsberg, who is twenty-one years old and is a keen and accomplished swordswoman. She is bound by the decree of her father, anxious to unite the two States, either to marry Prince Louis of Courtland or to forfeit her dominion. In order to see her affianced husband unknown to him, Joan, who is very impetuous, dons masculine dress and pays an incognito visit to Courtland, disguised as a secretary named "Johann Pyrmont." Here she makes the acquaintance of Princess Margaret of Courtland, who introduces the secretary to her brother, and is herself greatly fascinated by the young man's looks and ingenuousness. The Princess discards her former cavalier, a Muscovite Prince, who is mad with jealousy. "Johann," however, is much confused by the double *rôle* that is necessary in order to preserve the secret of her identity, though she is most favourably impressed with the glimpse she has of the man whom she regards as her future husband. Ultimately Joan proceeds to Courtland as a bride. Owing to an attack of illness, Prince Louis is unable to see her until they meet at the altar, when, to her dismay, Joan finds that the Prince whose memory she has been cherishing so happily is but Prince Conrad, the younger brother and the bishop who is to marry her, while the bridegroom is a man as repellent and ill-favoured as his brother is attractive. Joan at first refuses to marry him, but eventually yields to Princess Margaret's persuasion. On the steps of the cathedral, however, she suddenly withdraws from her husband, telling him she has fulfilled the letter of the contract, but will have no more to do with him. Hastily springing to her horse, she rides out of the city, and, followed by her horsemen, makes straight for Kernsberg. Prince Louis is bewildered by the unexpected turn in events, but he presently gives way to the persuasions of the Muscovite Prince and follows the runaway bride. The expedition is unsuccessful, and only reaches Kernsberg to find the Duchess safely in her stronghold. The flouted bridegroom then resorts to force, and returns with a powerful army of his own and Muscovite men.

CHAPTER XIX.

JOAN STANDS WITHIN HER DANGER.

So soon as Werner von Orseln returned to Castle Kernsberg with news of the forcing of the Alla and the overwhelming numbers of the Muscovite hordes, the sad-eyed Duchess of Hohenstein became once more Joan of the Sword Hand.

Hitherto she had doubted and feared. But now the thought of Prince Wasp and his Muscovite savages steadied her, and she was here and there, in every bastion of the Castle, looking especially to the gates which commanded the roads to Courtland and Plassenburg.

Her one thought was, "Will *he* be here?"

And again she saw the knight of the white plume storm through the lists of Courtland, and the enemy go down before him. Ah, if only——!

The invading army must have numbered thirty thousand, at least. There were, all told, about two thousand in Kernsberg. Von Orseln, indeed, could easily have raised more. Nay, they would have come in of themselves by hundreds to fight for their Duchess, but the little hill town could not feed more. Yet Joan was not discouraged. She joked with Peter Balta upon the louts of Courtlanders taking the Castle which Henry the Lion had fortified. The Courtlanders, indeed! Had not Duke Casimir assaulted Kernsberg in vain, and even the great Margraf George threatened it? Yet still it remained a virgin fortress, looking out over the fertile and populous plain. But now what were left of the shepherds had fled to the deep-bosomed mountains with their flocks. The cattle were hidden in the thickest woods; only the white farm-houses remained tenantless, silently waiting the coming of the spoiler. And now, stripped for combat, Castle Kernsberg looked out towards the invader, the rolling plain in front of it, behind the grim, intricate hill country of Hohenstein.

When Werner von Orseln and Peter Balta met the invader at the fords of the Alla, Maurice von Lynar and Alt Pikker had remained with Joan, nominally to assist her dispositions, but really to form a check upon the impetuosity of her temper.

Now Von Orseln was back again. The fords of the Alla were forced, and the fighting strength of Kernsberg united itself in the Eagle's Nest to make its final stand.

Aloft on the highest ramparts there was

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a terrace walk which the Sparhawk much affected, specially when he was on guard at night. It looked towards the east, and from it the first glimpse of the Courtlanders would be obtained.

In the great hall of the guard they were drinking their nightly toast. The shouting might have been heard in the town, where at street corners were groups of youths exercising late with wooden spears and mimic armour, crying "Hurrah, Kernsberg!"

They changed it, however, in imitation of their betters in the Castle above.

"*Joan of the Sword Hand! Hoch!*"

The shout went far into the night. Again and yet again it was repeated from the crowded board in the hall of the men-at-arms and from the gloomy streets beneath.

When all was over, the Sparhawk rose, belted his sword a hole tighter, set a steel cap without a visor upon his head, glanced at Werner von Orseln, and withdrew, leaving the other captains to their free-running jest and laughter. Captain Boris of Plassenburg was telling a story with a countenance more than ordinarily grave and earnest, while the table round rang with contagious mirth.

The Sparhawk found the high terrace of the Lion Tower guarded by a sentry. Him he removed to the foot of the turret-stair, with orders to permit no one save Werner von Orseln to pass on any pretext.

Presently the chief captain's step was heard on the stone turnpike.

"Ha, Sparhawk," he cried, "this is cold cheer! Why could we not have talked comfortably in hall, with a beaker of mead at one's elbow?"

"The enemy are not in sight," said the Sparhawk gloomily.

"Well, that is bad luck," said Werner; "but do not be afraid, you will have your chance yet—indeed, all you want and a little over—in the way of killing Muscovites."

"I wanted to speak with you on a matter we cannot mention elsewhere," said Maurice von Lynar.

The chief captain stopped in his stride, drew his cloak about him, rested his thigh on a square battlement, and resigned himself.

"Well," he said, "youth has ever yeasty brains. Go on."

"I would speak of my lady!" said the youth.

"So would most mooncalves of your age!" growled Werner; "but they do not usually bring their commanding officers up to the housetops to do it!"

"I mean our lady, the Duchess Joan!"

"Ah," said Werner, with the persiflage gone out of his tone, "that is altogether another matter."

And the two men were silent for a minute, both looking out into the blackness where no stars shone nor any light twinkled beyond the walls of the little fortified hill town.

At last Maurice von Lynar spoke.

"How long can we hold out if they besiege us?"

"Two months, certainly — with luck, three!"

"And then?"

Werner von Olseln shrugged his shoulders, but only said, "A soldier never anticipates disaster!"

"And what of the Duchess Joan?" persisted the young man.

"Why, in the same time she will be dead or wed!" said Von Orseln, with an affectation of carelessness easily seen through.

The young man burst out, "Dead she may be! I know she will never be wife to that Courtland Death's-head. I saw it in her eyes that day in their Cathedral, when she bade me slip out and bring up our four hundred lances of Kernsberg."

"Like enough," said Werner shortly. "I, for one, set no bounds to any woman's likings or mislikings!"

"We must get her away to a place of safety," said the young man. Von Orseln laughed.

"Get her? Who would persuade or compel our lady? Whither would she go? Would she be safer there than here? Would the Courtlander not find out in twenty-four hours that there was no Joan of the Sword Hand in Kernsberg, and follow her trail? And lastly—question most pertinent of all—what had you to drink down there in hall, young fellow?"

The Sparhawk did not notice the last question, nor did he reply in a similarly jeering tone.

"We must persuade her—capture her, compel her, if necessary. Kernsberg cannot for long hold out against both the Muscovite and the Courtlander. Save good Jorian and Boris, who will lie manfully about their fighting, there is no help for us in mortal man. So this is what we must do to save our lady!"

"What? Capture Joan of the Sword Hand and carry her off? The mead buzzes in the boy's head. He grows dotty with anxiety and too much hard ale. 'Ware, Maurice—these battlements are not over high. I will relieve you, lad! Go to bed and sleep it off!"

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"Von Orseln," said the youth, with simple earnestness, not heeding his taunts, "I have thought deeply. I see no way out of it but this. Our lady will eagerly go on reconnaissance if you represent it as necessary You must take ten good men and ride north, far north, even to the edges of the Baltic, to a place I know of, which none but I and one other can find. There, with a few trusty fellows to guard her, she will be safe till the push of the times is over."

The chief captain was silent. He had wholly dropped his jeering mood. "There is nothing else that I can see for it," the young Dane went on, finding that Werner did not speak. "Our Joan will never go to Courtland alive. She will not be carried off on Prince Louis' saddle-bow, as a Cossack might carry off a Circassian slave!"

"But how," said Von Orseln, meditating, "will you prevent her absence being known? The passage of so large a party may easily be traced and remembered. Though our folk are true enough and loyal enough, sooner or later what is known in the Castle is known in the town, and what is known in the town becomes known to the enemy!"

Maurice von Lynar leaned forward towards his chief captain and whispered a few words in his ear.

"Ah!" he said, and nodded. Then, after a pause for thought, he added, "That is none so ill thought on for a beardless younker! I will think it over, sleep on it, and tell you my opinion to-morrow!"

"'I would speak of my lady.'"

The youth tramped to and fro on the terrace, muttering to himself.

"Good night, Sparhawk!" said Von Orseln, from the top of the corkscrew stair, as he prepared to descend; "go to bed. I will send Alt Pikker to command the house-guard to-night. Do you get straightway between the sheets as soon as may be. If this mad scheme comes off you will need your beauty-sleep with a vengeance! So take it now!"

"At any rate," the chief captain growled to himself, "you have a pretty part set for me. I may forthwith order my shroud. I shall never be able to face my lady again!"

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CHAPTER XX.

THE CHIEF CAPTAIN'S TREACHERY.

THE Duchess Joan was in high spirits. It had been judged necessary, in consultation with her chief officers, to ride a reconnaissance to ascertain whether the advancing enemy had cut Kernsberg off towards the north. On this matter Von Orseln thought that her Highness had better judge for herself. Here at last was something to be done. It was almost like the old foraying days, but now in a more desperate cause.

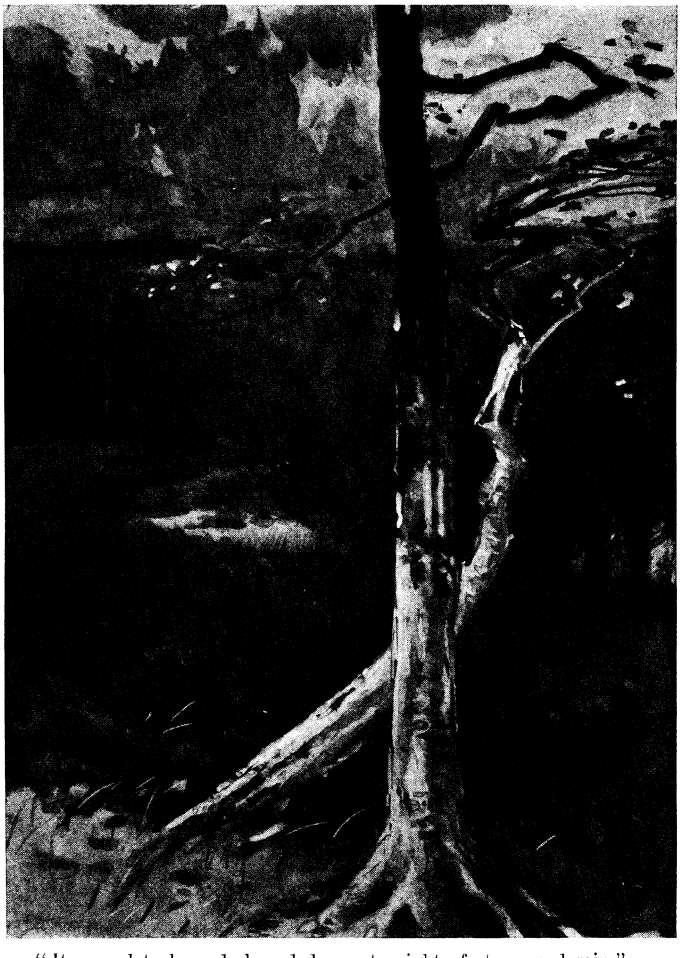
Ten days before, Joan's maidens and her aged nurse had been sent for safety to Plassenburg, under escort of Captains Boris and Jorian as far as the frontier, who had, however, returned in time to accompany her party on their ride northward.

No one in all Castle Kernsberg was to know of the departure of this cavalcade. Shortly before midnight the horses were to be ready under the Castle wall. The Sparhawk was appointed to command during Von Orseln's absence. Ten men only were to go, and these picked and sifted riders—chosen because of their powers of silence—and because, being unmarried, they had no wives to worm secrets out of them. Sweethearts they might have, but then, in Kernsberg at least, that is a very different thing.

Finally, having written to their princely master in Plassenburg, that they were leaving on account of the war—in which, as envoys extraordinary, they did not desire to be mixed up—Captains Boris and Jorian made them ready to accompany the reconnaissance. It proved to be a dark and desperate night of storm and rain. The stars were ever and anon concealed by the thick pall of cloud which the wind from the south drove hurtling athwart them. Joan herself was in the highest spirits. She wore a long blue cloak, which completely concealed the firmly knit, slender figure, clad in forester's dress, from prying eyes.

As for Werner von Orseln, that high captain was calm and grave as usual, but the rest of the ten men were plainly nervous, as they fingered their bridle-reins and avoided looking at each other while they waited ready to mount.

With a clatter of hoofs they were off, none in the Castle knowing more than that Werner the chief captain rode out on his occasions.



"It proved to be a dark and desperate night of storm and rain."

A townsman or two huddled closer among his blankets as the clatter and jingle of the horses mingled with the sharp volleying of the rain upon his wind-beaten lattice, while the long *whoo* of the wind sang of troublous times in the twisted chimneys overhead.

Joan, as the historian has already said, was in high spirits.

"Werner," she cried, as soon as they were clear of the town, "if we strike the enemy

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to-night, I declare we will draw sword and ride at them."

"*If* we strike them to-night, right so, my lady!" returned Werner promptly.

But he had the best of reasons for knowing that they would not strike any enemy that night. His last spy from the north had arrived not half an hour before they started, having ridden completely round the enemy's host.

Joan and her chief captain rode on ahead, Von Orseln glancing keenly about him, and Joan riding free and careless, as in old days when she overpassed the hills to drive a prey from the lands of her father's enemies.

It was grey morning when they came to a goatherd's hut at the top of the green valley. Already they had passed the bounds of Hohenstein by half a dozen miles. The goatherd had led his light-skipping train to the hills for the day, and the rude and chaotic remains of his breakfast were still on the table. Boris and Jorian cleared these away, and, with the trained alacrity of seasoned men-at-arms, they placed before the party a breakfast prepared with speed out of what they had brought with them and those things which they had found to their hand by foraging in the cottage of the goatherd—to wit, sliced neat's-tongue dried in the smoke, bread of fine wheat which Jorian had carried all the way in a net at his saddle-bow. Boris had charge of the wine-skins, and upon a shelf above the door they found a great butter-pot full of freshly made curded goats' milk, very delicious both to taste and smell.

Of these things they ate and drank largely, Joan and Von Orseln being together at the upper end of the table. Boris and Jorian had to sit with them, though much against their wills, being (spite of their sweethearts) more accustomed to the company of honest men-at-arms than to the practice of dainty eating in ladies' society.

Joan undertook to rally them upon their loves, for whose fair fingers, as it has been related in an earlier chapter, she had given them rings.

"And how took your Katrin the ring, Boris?" she said, looking at him past the side of her glass. For Jorian had bethought him to bring one for the Duchess, which he cleansed and cooled at the spring without. As for the others, they all drank out of one wooden whey cog, as was most fitting.

"Why, she took it rarely," said honest Boris, "and swore to love me more than ever for it. We are to be married upon my first return to Plassenburg."

"Which, perhaps, is the reason why you are in no hurry to return thither, seeing that you stopped short at the frontier last week?" said the Duchess shrewdly.

"Nay, my lady, that grieved me sore, for, indeed, we love each other dearly, Katrin and I," persisted Captain Boris, thinking, as was his custom, to lie himself out of it by dint of the mere avoirdupois of asseveration.

"That is the greater marvel," returned the lady, smiling upon him, "because when last I spoke with you concerning the matter, her name was not Katrin, but Gretchen!"

Boris was silent, as well he might be, for even as he lied he had had some lurking suspicion of this himself. He felt that he could hope to get no further by this avenue.

The lady turned to Jorian, who, having digested the defeat and shame of Boris, was ready to be very indignant at his companion for having claimed his sweetheart.

"And you, Captain Jorian," she said, "how went it with you? Was your ring well received?"

"Aye, marry," said that gallant captain, "better than well. Much better! Never did I see woman so grateful. Katrin, whom this long, wire-drawn, splenetic fool hath lyingly claimed as his (by some trick of tongue born of his carrying the malmsey at his saddle-bow)—Katrin, I say, did kiss and clip me so that my very soul fainted within me. She could not make enough of the giver of such a precious thing as your Highness's ring?"

Jorian in his own estimation was doing very well. He thought he could yet better it.

"Her eyes sparkled with joy. Her hands twitched—she could not keep them from turning the pretty jewel about upon her finger. She swore never to part with it while life lasted——"

"Then," said Joan, smiling, "have no more to do with her. She is a false wench and mansworn. For do not I see it upon the little finger of your left hand at this moment? Nay, do not turn the stone within. I know my gift, and will own it even if your Katrin (was it not?) hath despised it. What say you now to that, Jorian?"

"My lady," faltered Jorian, striving manfully to recover himself, "when I came again in the honourable guise of an ambassador to Kernsberg, Katrin gave it back again to me, saying, 'You have no signet ring. Take this, so that you be not ashamed among those others. Keep it for me. I myself will place it on your finger with a loving kiss.'"

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"Well done, Captain Jorian, you are a better liar than your friend. But still your excuses should accord better. The ring I gave you is not a signet ring. That Katrin of yours must have been ignorant indeed."

With these words Joan of the Sword Hand rose to her feet, for the ex-men-at-arms had not so much as a word to say.

"Let us now mount and ride homeward," she said; "there are no enemy to be found on this northerly road. We shall be more fortunate upon another occasion."

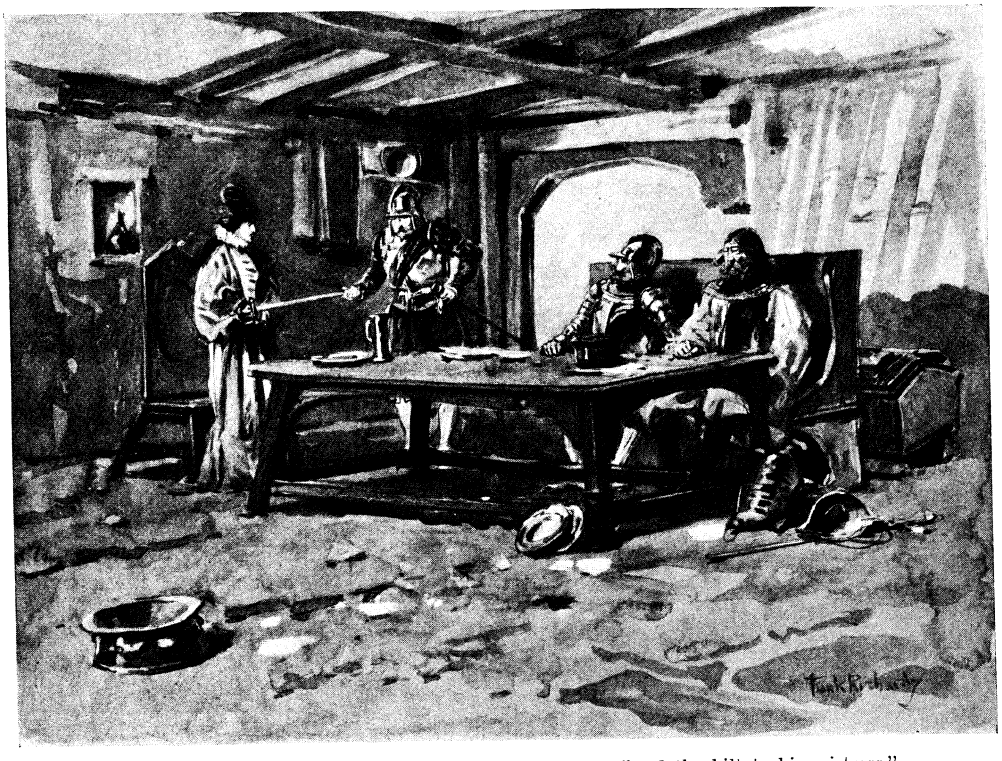
Then Werner Von Orseln nerved himself for a battle more serious than any he had ever fought at the elbow of Henry the Lion of Hohenstein.

"My lady," he said, standing up and bowing gravely before her, "you see here eleven men who love you far above their lives, of whom I am the chief. Two others also there are, who, though not of our nation, are in heart joined to us, especially in this thing that we have done. With all respect, your Highness cannot go back. We have come out, not to make a reconnaissance, but to put you Grace in a place of safety till the storm blows over."

The Duchess had slowly risen to her feet, with her hand on the sword which swung at her belt.

"You have suddenly gone mad, Werner!" she said; "let us have no more of this. I bid you mount and ride. Back to Kernsberg, I say! Ye are not such fools and traitors as to deliver the maiden Castle, the Eagle's Nest of Hohenstein, into the hands of our enemies?"

"Nay," said Von Orseln, looking steadily upon the ground, "that will we not do. Kernsberg is in good hands, and will fight bravely. But we cannot hold out with our few folk and scanty provender against the leaguer of thirty thousand. Nevertheless we will not permit you to sacrifice yourself for our sakes or for the sake of the women and children of the city."



"Werner von Orseln took his sword by the point and offered the hilt to his mistress."

Joan drew her sword.

"Werner von Orseln, will you obey me, or must I slay you with my hand?" she cried.

The chief captain yet further bowed his head and abased his eyes.

"We have thought also of this," he made answer. "Me you may kill, but these that are with me will defend themselves, though

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they will not strike one they love more than their lives. But man by man we have sworn to do this thing. At all hazards you must abide in our hands till the danger is overpast. For me (this he added in a deeper tone), I am your immediate officer. There is none to come between us. It is your right to slay me if you will. Mine is the responsibility for this deed, though the design was not mine. Here is my sword. Slay your chief captain with it if you will. He has faithfully served your house for five-and-thirty years. 'Tis perhaps time he rested now."

And with these words Werner von Orseln took his sword by the point and offered the hilt to his mistress.

Joan of the Sword Hand shook with mingled passion and helplessness, and her eyes were dark and troubled.

"Put up your blade," she said, striking the hilt with her hand; "if you have not deserved death, no more have I deserved this! But you said that the design was not yours. Who, then, has dared to plot against the liberty of Joan of Hohenstein?"

"I would I could claim the honour," said Werner the chief captain; "but truly the matter came from Maurice von Lynar the Dane. It is to his mother, who after the death of the Count von Lynar continued to dwell in a secret strength on the Baltic shore, that we are conducting your Grace!"

"Maurice von Lynar?" exclaimed Joan, astonished. "He remains in Castle Kernsberg, then?"

"Aye," said Werner, relieved by her tone, "he will take your place when danger comes. In morning twilight or at dusk he makes none so ill a Lady Duchess, and, i' faith, his sword hand is brisk enough. If the town be taken, better that he than you be found in Castle Kernsberg. Is the thing not well invented, my lady?"

Werner looked up hopefully. He thought he had pleaded his cause well.

"Traitor! supplanter!" cried Joan indignantly; "this Dane in my place! I will hang him from the highest window in the Castle of Kernsberg if ever I win back to mine own again!"

"My lady," said Werner, gently and respectfully, "your servant Von Lynar bade me tell you that he would as faithfully and loyally take your place now as he did on a former occasion!"

"Ah," said Joan, smiling wanly with a quick change of mood, "I hope he will be more ready to give up his privileges on this occasion than on that!"

She was thinking of the Princess Margaret and the heritage of trouble upon which, as the Count von Löen, she had caused the Sparhawk to enter.

Then a new thought seemed to strike her.

"But my nurse and my women—how can

"The Wordless Man."

he keep the imposture secret? He may pass before the stupid eyes of men. But they——"

"If your Highness will recollect, they have been sent out of harm's way into Plassenburg. There is not a woman born of woman in all the Castle of Kernsberg!"

"Yes," mused Joan, "I have indeed been

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fairly cozened. I gave that order also by the Dane's advice. Well, let him have his run. We will reeve him a firm collar of hemp at the end of it, and maybe for Werner von Orseln also, as a traitor alike to his bread and his mistress. Till then I hope you will both enjoy playing your parts."

The chief captain bowed.

"I am content, my lady," he said respectfully.

"Now, good jailers all," cried Joan, "lead on. I will follow. Or would you prefer to carry me with you handcuffed and chained? I will go with you in what fashion seemeth good to my masters!"

She paused and looked round the little goatherd's hut.

"Only," she said, nodding her head, "I warn you I will take my own time and manner of coming back!"

There was a deep silence as the men drew their belts tighter and prepared to mount and depart.

"About that time, Jorian," whispered Boris as they went out, "you and I will be better in Plassenburg than within the bounds of Kernsberg—for our health's sake and our sweethearts', that is!"

"Good!" said Jorian, dropping the bars of his visor; "but she is a glorious wench, and looks her bravest when she is angry!"

CHAPTER XXI.

ISLE RUGEN.

THEY had travelled for six hours through high arched pines, their fallen needles making a carpet green and springy underfoot. Then succeeded oaks, stricken a little at top with the frosts of years. Alternating with these were marshy tracts where alder and white birch gleamed from the banks of shallow runnels and the margins of black, peaty lakes. Anon the broom and the gorse began to wave sparsely above wide sandhills, heaved this way and that like the waves of a mountainous sea.

The party was approaching that no-man's-land which stretches for upwards of a hundred miles along the southern shores of the Baltic. It was a land of vast brackish backwaters connected with the outer sea by devious channels often half silted up, but still feeling the pulse of the outer green water in the winds which blew over the sandy "bills," bars, and spits, and which brought with them sweet scents of heather and wild thyme, and, most of all, of the southernwood which grew wild on the scantily pastured braes.

It was a beautiful but lonely country—the 'batable land of half a dozen princedoms, its only inhabitant a stray hunter setting up his gipsy booth of wattled boughs, heaping with stones a rude fireplace, or fixing a tripod over it whereon a pottinger was presently a-swing, in some sunny curve of the shore.

At eventide of the third day of their journeying the party came to a great morass. Black decaying trunks of trees stood up at various angles, often bristling with dead branches like *chevaux-de-frise*. The horses picked their path warily through this tangle, the rotten sticks yielding as readily as wet mud beneath their hoofs. Finally all dismounted except Joan, while Werner von Orseln, with a rough map in his hand, traced out the way. Pools of stagnant black water had to be evaded, treacherous yellow sands tested, bridges constructed of the firmer logs, till all suddenly they came out upon a fairylike little half-moon of sand and tiny shells.

Here was a large flat-bottomed boat, drawn up against the shore. In the stern a strange figure was seated, a man, tall and angular, clad in jerkin and trunks of brown tanned leather, cross-gartered hose of grey cloth, and home-made shoon of hide with the hair outside. He wore a black skull cap, and his head had the strange, uncanny look of a wild animal. It was not at the first glance nor yet at the second that Boris and Jorian found out the cause of this curious appearance.

Meanwhile, Werner von Orseln was putting into his hand some pledge or sign which he scrutinised carefully, when Jorian gripped his companion's arm.

"Look," he whispered, "he's got no ears!"

"Nor any tongue!" responded Boris, staring with all his eyes at the prodigy.

And, indeed, the strange man was pointing to his mouth with the index finger of his right hand and signing that they were to follow him into the boat which had been waiting for them.

Joan of the Sword Hand had never spoken since she knew that her men were taking her to a place of safety. Nor did her face show any trace of emotion now that Werner von Orseln, approaching cap in hand, humbly begged her to permit him to conduct her to the boat.

But the Duchess leapt from her horse and without accepting his hand she stepped

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"'Follow me!' said the woman, in a deep, rich voice."

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from the little pier of stone beside which the boat lay, and walking firmly from seat to seat she reached the stern, where she sat down without seeming to have so much as glanced at any of the company.

Werner von Orseln then motioned Captains Boris and Jorian to take their places in the bow, and having bared his head he seated himself beside his mistress. The wordless, earless man took the oars and pushed off. The boat slid over a little belt of still water through a wilderness of tall reeds. Then suddenly the wavelets lapped clean beneath her bottom, and the wide levels of a lake opened out before them. The ten men left on the shore set about building a fire and making shelters of brushwood, as if they expected to stay there some time.

The tiny harbour was fenced in on every side with an unbroken wall of lofty green pines. The lower part of their trunks shot up tall and straight and opened long vistas into the black depths of the forest. The sun was setting and threw slant rays far underneath, touching with gold the rank, marish growths, and reddening the mouldering boles of the fallen pines.

The boat passed almost noiselessly along, the strange man rowing strongly and the boat drawing steadily away across the widest part of the still inland sea. As they thus coasted along the gloomy shores the sun went down and darkness came upon them at a bound. Then at the far end of the long tunnel, which an hour agone had been sunny glades, they saw strange flickering lights dancing and vanishing, waving and leaping upward—will-o'-the-wisps kindled doubtless from the stagnant boglands and the rotting vegetation of that ancient northern forest.

The breeze freshened. The water clappered louder under the boat's quarter. Breaths born of the wide sea unfiltered through forest dankness visited more keenly the nostrils of the voyagers. They heard ahead of them the distant roar of breakers. Now and then there came a long and gradual roll underneath their quarter, quite distinct from the little chopping waves of the fresh-water *haff*, as the surface of the mere heaved itself in a great slope of water in which the boat swung sideways.

After a space tall trees again shot up overhead, and with a quick turn the boat passed between walls of trembling reeds that rustled against the oars like silk, emerged on a black circle of water, and then, gliding smoothly forward, took ground in the blank dark.

As the broad keel grated on the sand, the Wordless Man leapt out, and, standing on the shore, put his hands to his mouth and emitted a long shout like a blast blown on a conch shell. Again and again that melancholy ululation, with never a consonantal sound to break it, went forth into the night. Yet it was so modulated that it had obviously a meaning for someone, and to put the matter beyond a doubt it was answered by three shrill whistles from behind the rampart of trees.

Joan sat still in the boat where she had placed herself. She had asked no question, and even these strange experiences did not alter her resolution.

Presently a light gleamed uncertainly through the trees, now lost behind brushwood and again breaking out.

A tall figure moved forward with a step quick and firm. It was that of a woman who carried a swinging lantern in her hand, from which wheeling lights gleamed through a score of variously coloured little plates of horn. She wore about her shoulders a great crimson cloak which masked her shape. A hood of the same material, attached at the back of the neck to the cloak, concealed her head and dropped about her face, partially hiding her features.

Standing still on a little wooden pier she held the lantern high, so that the light fell on those in the boat, and their faces looked strangely white in that illumined circle, surrounded as it was by a pent-house of tense blackness, black pines, black water, black sky.

"Follow me!" said the woman, in a deep, rich voice—a voice whose tones thrilled those who heard them to their hearts, so rich and low were some of the notes.

Joan of the Sword Hand rose to her feet.

"I am the Duchess of Hohenstein, and I do not leave this boat till I know in what place I am, and who this may be that cries 'Follow!' to the daughter of Henry the Lion!"

The tall woman turned without bowing and looked at the girl.

"I am the mother of Maurice von Lynar, and this is the Isle Rugen!" she said simply, as if the answer were all sufficient.

(*To be continued.*)

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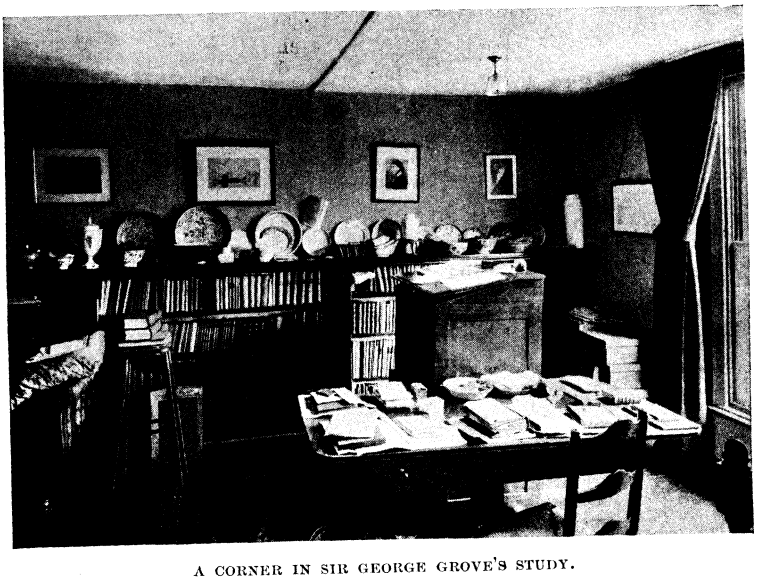
THE HOBBIES OF MUSICIANS.

By F. Klickmann.

THE hobbies and recreations of musicians are as diverse and various as the musicians themselves, and often give us a surprising insight into a side of their character quite different from the one we are accustomed to see. In some cases there seems nothing incongruous in the way a musician will spend his spare time; no one would expect it otherwise than that Sir George Grove, for instance, should be an ardent *littérateur*. But in the case of this veteran musician literature is his profession rather than music. Sir George is without doubt one of the most versatile men of this century. He started life as an engineer, later on he was secretary to the Crystal Palace. He also edited *Macmillan's Magazine* and took a prominent part in the publishing house of Macmillan and Co. His work in connection with the exploration of Palestine must certainly be classed among his recreations. He takes as great an interest in all these matters, moreover, as he does in music.



A CORNER IN SIR GEORGE GROVE'S STUDY.
The upright desk was formerly the property of Dean Stanley.

The study in his quaint wooden house at Sydenham is a unique room, with most fascinating bookshelves. In this room we have evidence of yet another of his hobbies—old china, and more especially blue, which is seen on all sides. In the drawing-room there is also a beautiful collection of "blue." Sir George has enthusiasms on so many subjects that it is impossible to classify them in the hard and fast manner one can the hobbies of most other people. It is safe to say, however, that almost any subject of modern interest has received more than an ordinary share of this remarkable man's attention.

Sir Charles Hubert Parry, who, as everyone knows, succeeded Sir George Grove as head of the Royal College of Music, is primarily devoted to the sea. He is an expert swimmer and a most daring and skilful yachtsman.

It is water, also, that chiefly attracts Sir Frederic Bridge, but this time with a difference, for Sir Frederic is a devotee of the rod and line, salmon fishing being his favourite pastime. For many years Sir Frederic and Lady Bridge have fished every season in the Spean. One year they caught ninety-seven fish, the heaviest weighing forty-three pounds. This was landed by Lady Bridge. On one occasion Sir Frederic hooked and landed a twenty pound salmon by the tail, and another time, in a very rapid river in Ross-shire, he caught a salmon with a trout rod. He had neither gaff nor landing-net, but secured it by the help of his little daughter, who is equally keen over the sport. Lady Bridge has evidently helped to foster her husband's taste, for she herself has been accustomed to handle the rod since she was eight years old. Last October she caught seven heavy fish, one after the other; the final one, weighing twenty-eight pounds, she landed in the dark by the help of a lantern, and it was in a dangerous

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place, too. Latterly Sir Frederic has taken up other forms of sport and has gone in for deerstalking. In connection with this a curious incident happened some time ago, when he was out with his father-in-law in Ireland. They had been crawling in absolute silence over bogs and rocks, to get near a deer who was all on the alert. They had got into position for the shot, and were just taking aim, when Sir Frederic realised that he was going to sneeze. Quickly burying his face in the bog, he made such an extraordinary noise that his companion thought another stag was just behind them. Strangely enough, the stalked one did not hear or move, and, despite the sneeze, was duly brought down in good form.

Another musician who finds much of his recreation in the open air is Mr. Frederic H. Cowen, mountaineering being his speciality. He may be said to know the mountains of Europe almost as well as he does the streets of London. But this is not all; Mr. Cowen has also very pronounced literary tastes, and is a keen collector of first editions. In his study he has a large collection of rare and valuable old books; he also has a goodly array of humorous and quaint prints, while one side of his study displays in great variety a collection of Scandinavian drinking horns which he collected during his travels in Norway. Mr. Cowen has a happy knack in writing humorous verses, as the following will show—

IMPROMPTU ON A "RISING ENGLISH COMPOSER."

He was born half a century after Mozart,
On the very same day of the year,
And this singular fact was a source of great joy
To the Press, who exclaimed, "A good omen! The boy
Will most certainly make a career!"

At the great age of four he could play all the tunes
Which he heard on the organs, by ear;
And at ten he composed such a beautiful song
That they said, "We must praise him, for surely ere long
He will make an unheard-of career."

At twenty a symphony which he composed
With delight drove musicians quite wild—
So the Press took him up: "The work shows signs of haste;
But it promises well—and we've not the bad taste
To discourage this talented child."

At thirty an opera came from his pen,
And to hear it all Londoners ran—
Again were the critics most kind: "We are glad
To be able to state the work's really not bad;
He's a promising, rising young man!"

At forty, at fifty, at sixty, more works
Were produced with enormous success,
And they gained for him everywhere money and fame—
"We are so pleased to see that he's making a name
For himself by degrees," said the Press.

At seventy, one more great work he composed,
And it took the whole world by surprise.
The critics were now quite enraptured: "In truth
He will do something yet, will this promising youth,
If thus fast he continues to rise."

At eighty he died; then with sorrow they spoke
Of the loss which all Europe befell,
And expressed themselves thus: "It is sad, we must say,
That a talent so great should be taken away
At a time when it promised so well!"

The following invitation to a birthday dissipation, which he sent to his friends some years ago, may likewise be fittingly included here—

Amity House.

There's a humble little dwelling not three miles from Charing Cross,
'Tis but five-and-twenty minutes (in a cab with decent horse);
In this dwelling lives a minstrel (or composer, as he's styled),
Who, although he's always *Cowin'*, is both timid, meek, and mild;
But, unlike that other bard, so famous in poetic lore,
He is not "infirm and old" although he reckons many a *score*.
Now this minstrel labours day and night in solitary toil,
And, though free from journalistic *whacks*, still burns the midnight *oil*.
Of faithful, sympathising friends he knows there is no lack,
But he seldom sees their faces, though they often see his back,
No "harp" has he to comfort him, nor any "orphan boy,"
And, sick of *scales* in *sea*, he'd have no "*sole* remaining joy"
Did he not hope to see around his hearth those friends he owns,
And in *common chord* of friendship hear once more their kindly *tones*.
Ah! dull is work without some play to ease the weary head!
Life's *rôle* should sometimes cheerful be, though earning daily bread!
So, when this minstrel's lines you read, if pity you have got.
Although your leisure hours be *few*, please come and cheer his *lot*
On January 29th at 9 o'clock.

Mr. August Manns is likewise a musician who can turn his pen to more than ordinary account, and the facility with which he does this is all the more surprising when one recollects that he is not an Englishman. Acrostics are his favourite diversion. The following he wrote with scarcely a minute's hesitation—

Flora, of the C. P. Choir,
Lovely music does admire.
Organ, fiddle, harp or flute,
Rarely in her heart are mute.
August Manns says, "*Das ist gut!*"

Sir George Martin is very artistic in his tastes. Fine architecture in particular appeals to him. The superb Grinling Gibbons carvings in St. Paul's Cathedral are a constant source of delight to him. He remarked to me one

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day, when he was showing me some of the less known treasures of the Cathedral, that it always saddened him to think that if the building were to be destroyed in any way, the carving is the one thing that could never be replaced. "And," he added, "the pity of it is that so few people can see it, hidden away as it is in the choir-stalls."

Madame Adelina Patti's affection for her parrots is well-known. She had one favourite bird, "Cooky," who always had to have a light left burning in his room at night, as he had a curious trick of falling off his perch when he was asleep. He could not see in the dark, and consequently was unable to find his way back on to his perch. Hence he was accommodated with a night-light.

Madame Melba had a curious pet. It was a Mexican beetle, to which she had attached a small chain. This allowed it a certain amount of freedom, without an opportunity for running away. She liked to have it on her dress.

Madame Christine Nilsson has a pet monkey on which she and her stepdaughter lavish much care and attention. They keep the funny little creature dressed in the latest Parisian fashion at all times.

Anna Williams

AND HER FAVOURITE DACHSHUND "PARRY."
Photo by Byrne & Co., Richmond.

Miss Anna Williams is devoted to her dogs. She has some dachshunds which she has trained to do all sorts of intelligent tricks. Swedish drill and calisthenics likewise interest Miss Williams.

It may not be generally known that Miss Fanny Davies is a clever artist. The reproductions that we give of some of her water-colours were painted when she was in Italy. In her drawing-room above the pianoforte there hangs a fine crayon sketch of Beethoven. This was one of her earliest works. The room also contains many delightful art treasures that have been given to the famous pianist by equally famous artists.

It was to painting rather than to music that Miss Esther Palliser at one time intended to devote her life, as she has a great natural gift for the brush, but circumstances decided otherwise. Miss Palliser is very fond of walking. On one occasion she walked twenty-five miles, only resting once, for five minutes, by the way. Her one desire is to spend her life travelling all over the world—but not necessarily on foot, of course.

Another wielder of the brush is Mr. Andrew Black, who has done some excellent

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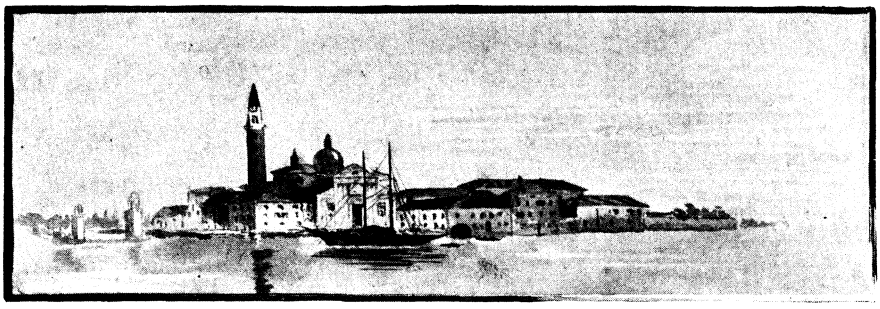


FROM A WATER COLOUR SKETCH BY MISS FANNY DAVIES.

oil paintings. He used to spend what spare time he could in the studio of the late James Pettie, the artist. The two men were great friends. Mr. Black is a keen yachtsman, billiards being another of his recreations. This last seems a favourite pastime with musicians; Paderewski spends much time at the billiard table. Miss Clara Eissler, the Court harpist to the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, is also an adept with her cue.

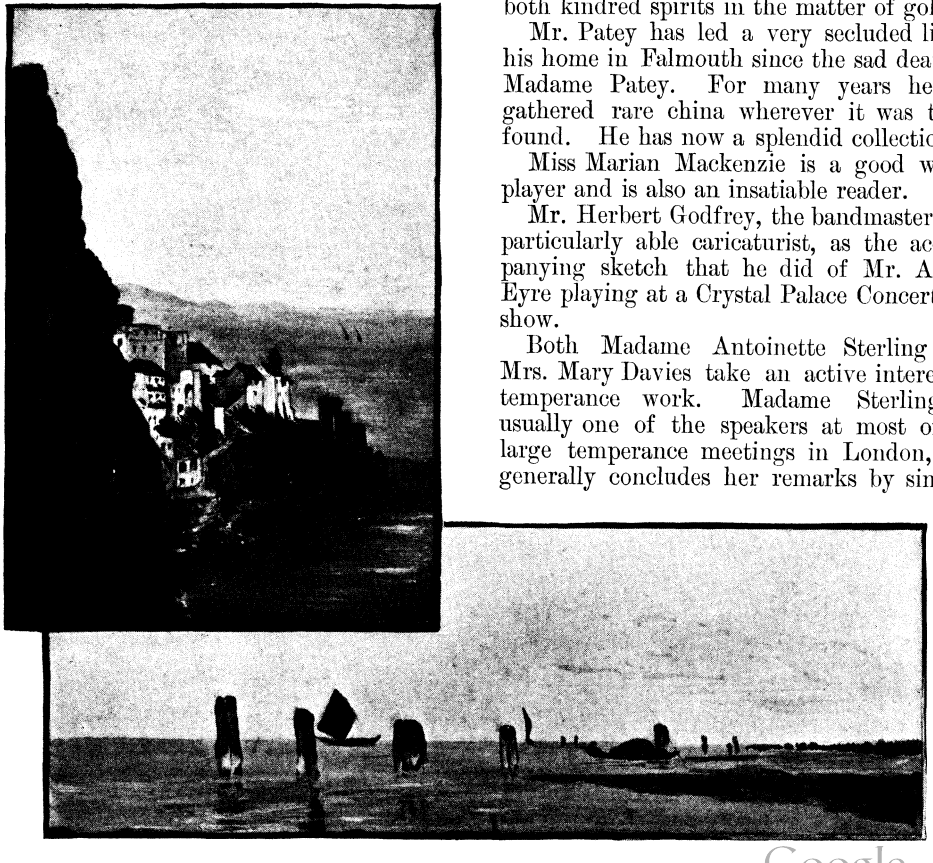
Mr. Watkin Mills is an energetic and unwearying golfer. He has played on all the principal British links, as well as on many of the famous American ones. If there is one other subject, in addition, on which Mr. Watkin Mills waxes enthusiastic, it is that of America and the Americans. His experiences in that delightful country must be reserved, however, for a special article at a later date. Mr. Norman Salmond and Mr. Dalgetty Henderson are both kindred spirits in the matter of golf.

Mr. Patey has led a very secluded life at his home in Falmouth since the sad death of Madame Patey. For many years he has gathered rare china wherever it was to be found. He has now a splendid collection.

Miss Marian Mackenzie is a good whist-player and is also an insatiable reader.

Mr. Herbert Godfrey, the bandmaster, is a particularly able caricaturist, as the accompanying sketch that he did of Mr. Alfred Eyre playing at a Crystal Palace Concert will show.

Both Madame Antoinette Sterling and Mrs. Mary Davies take an active interest in temperance work. Madame Sterling is usually one of the speakers at most of the large temperance meetings in London, and generally concludes her remarks by singing



ITALIAN SCENES SKETCHED BY MISS FANNY DAVIES.

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"O Rest in the Lord" or some other appropriate work. Mrs. Mary Davies has likewise sung much in the cause of total abstinence, and her ready graciousness in rendering any assistance that she can at a service or concert for charitable purposes must result in a never-ending stream of applications, I fancy! I remember on one occasion she was staying at a small, out-of-the-way village that I had better leave nameless. She was besought by the natives to sing a solo at the evening service in the chapel, and consented to do so, in order that a large congregation might be induced to attend and contribute liberally towards some local need. The preacher was an eloquent but obviously nervous young man; and though the congregation did not

MR. HERBERT GODFREY'S CARICATURE OF MR. ALFRED J. EYRE AT A CRYSTAL PALACE CONCERT.

MR. WATKIN MILLS IN THE RÔLE OF GOLFER.
Photo by Russell & Sons, Baker Street.

appear to notice the coincidence, it struck the stranger in their midst as somewhat humorous that the text chosen should be, "The time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."

A somewhat unusual hobby is that of scientific kite-flying, which has engrossed much of the spare time of Mr. Edward Elgar, the composer; he is also another of the many golf "victims!" Mr. Michael Maybrick, who is equally well known as a song writer under his pseudonym of "Stephen Adams," is a golf player, a cyclist, and a keen yachtsman. Cycling, by the way, does not seem to be very largely patronised by musicians, taking them as a whole, though, of course, there are exceptions.

Mr. Gerard F. Cobb was one of the original founders and the first president of the National Cyclists Union, while Miss Ilona Eibenschutz—that charming pianist who visits our country all too rarely—spends much of her time on the wheel when she is at her home in Vienna. Miss Frida Scotta, the Danish violinist, is an accomplished horsewoman, having been accustomed to riding since her early childhood. Madame Fanny Moody beguiles her leisure moments with the less fatiguing pastime of croquet,

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THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK

AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER (touring in the Western States): Pardon me, sir, but would you object to my taking your daughter just as she is?

FARMER GREENE: Wa-al, this is sudden; but take her and be happy. Keep yer eyes on him, Sal, till I scoot round fer th' parson.

BROWN: Deacon Jones says he expects to die in the odour of sanctity.

JENKINS: He must think that sanctity is more or less like a distillery.

"I AM going down the river to drown myself," she said tearfully.

"All right, my dear; start at once if you want to," said he coolly.

"It is raining, and it would spoil my new dress; but I am going just as soon as it stops—you see if I don't!"

"MY wife is the most ingenious woman who ever lived," said Thompson.

"I believe you," returned Johnson politely.

"But you don't know why you believe me," intimated Thompson.

"To tell the truth, I don't," replied Johnson, looking bored.

"Well, I'll tell you. We've been married twelve years, and lived in the same house all the time, and this morning she found a new place in which to hide my slippers."

"BOYS," said the school teacher, "who can tell me George Washington's motto?"

Several hands went up.

"James Tompkins, you may tell."

"'When in doubt, tell the truth.'"

DOLLIE: He promised to send back my lock of hair, but he hasn't done it yet.

MOLLIE: That's the way with these hair restorers—all promise and no performance.

THE EXILE.

By Edward F. Spence.

"WOULD you mind giving me just a pipeful? I haven't smoked English tobacco for ever so long."

"Certainly," I answered, and, touched by the eager note in the voice, I added, "you had better take all there is in the pouch. I start for England to-morrow, and my friend has enough for us both."

"Oh! thank you very much."

I looked at him with a little curiosity. He was an elderly Englishman, wearing clothes obviously cut in France, yet tortured to assume a sort of English air. His necktie, a kind of Gallic absurdity, was forced into the fashion of an eccentric sailor's knot. The face looked as if it had once been powerful, or at least energetic, but it was debased by a furtive look, and the beard it bore seemed to be a new acquaintance to his visage.

"You don't like French tobacco?" I said.

"No," he answered, producing a pipe. "It's not bad now and then in a cigarette, but it's bitter for a pipe."

"Your friends might keep you supplied; the trick is easily done. You send it in a packet with the name of a shop outside, marked, '*Échantillon sans valeur*,' that's all."

"I suppose it would be too great a tax on my friends."

His voice was full of bitterness. It awakened memories—memories caused my eyes to turn towards his hands, beautifully kept, therefore seeming out of keeping with his state. In sharp contrast with the elegant filbert nails of the fingers was the stunted nail of his right thumb. On the cruel impulse of the moment I exclaimed—

"Perhaps your friends think you have taxed them enough, Mr. Chapman?"

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The effect was horrible. The look of terror which came over the degraded face has often haunted me since; the sound of woe which coloured the sigh that issued from his white lips still afflicts me.

"You needn't be afraid, Mr. Chapman," I added hastily. "I'm not the police. It's an accidental discovery. I pledge you my word of honour I will tell nobody so long as you live. Waiter, *une fine champagne et de l'eau de seltz*."

"I suppose I can trust you. I suppose I must. You didn't lose anything. I don't know who you are. How did you know me? I thought the growth of beard and the shaving of moustache, the loss of hair and the teeth I had pulled out——"

"The broken nail on the well-kept hands betrayed you."

"Good gracious! the broken thumb-nail, result of the one brave act of my life!"

He drank the *fine* and *eau de seltz* greedily. There were no signs of the drink habit about him.

Suddenly he banged the marble table with his fist.

"Do you know what hell is?" he asked fiercely. "Hell is to live on fifty pounds a year when for twenty years you have been accustomed to spend fifty pounds a day. Why, I used to have a new silk hat every Monday morning—it was one of my fads—and they cost me as much in the year as my present income. I daresay my valet had the old ones brushed and relined and swindled me over the job."

"It must be a tight squeeze," I answered; "why only fifty pounds a year?"

"They won't give me more. They only give me that for fear I should come back to England and make a scandal, and I can't get work. What work can a discredited elderly Englishman fugitive from justice, who speaks French badly, hope to obtain? There was a time when I used to grumble because I had no leisure, and now, what wouldn't I give for work, for work however humbly paid!"

"Yet, after all, living is cheap here, and there are lots of people who——"

"Who live respectably and bring up families on fifty pounds a year—oh, I know; but they didn't have a hundred a year as pocket money before they left school, or live for over twenty years at an average rate of fifty pounds a day. There is even a worse hell than that: it's to have no hope. Good Heavens! What cataclysm of Nature could enable me ever to hold up my head again in the world? Fifty-five years of age and nothing to look forward to."

I tried to steel myself against a feeling of pity by thinking of the hundreds ruined by him. Across his face, too worn for his age, came a strange smile; into the faded blue eyes a curious light. "There is a kind of hope. Do you know I have got a system?"

"A system? a martingale."

"Yes, it's infallible, only I need a little capital. If I only had five hundred pounds I could go to Monte Carlo; I should win all the money I need; then I suppose if I paid all the creditors in full and with interest, I might make some kind of arrangement to come back unmolested, and be once more a man and in my own country."

It was wonderful to see how the delusion of hope blurred the wrinkles of his face and gave a suggestion of youth and strength.

"Your friends don't believe in your system?"

"No, no; but I know it's sound, and I have spent so much, so much in posting long letters explaining it all, and I don't think they even read them. Do you know, they have no confidence in me."

As he spoke he put out his hand towards

ACADEMY RAPTURES.

me. I remembered he used to have a habit of button-holing people. When it was half way the recollection of his position came to him, and it dropped heavily like the hand of a dead man, and a flood of purple rushed over his yellow-white face.

"I know it's a sure system," he said eagerly; "and, oh! I have scraped and saved out of my pound a week to get together a little capital; have

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cut down every expense, except, of course, one must dress decently!"

His tidy, care-marked, shiny clothes were more painfully eloquent of poverty than would have been mere rags and tatters and gaping boots.

"I have saved up money now and then, but it's too little to work a system with. The beginning of the year I put by almost everything; for months didn't even risk a franc on the *petits chevaux* till I got together a few pounds; then I made an effort. The system worked grandly at first, but when the hitch came and the reserve force was necessary for victory it was all swept away; I tasted no food but one small twist of bread for two days. You don't know anyone who would care to put a little money on a sure thing?"

I suppose that the hardened look in my face stopped him, for he paused.

"You took away a good deal of money."

"Only three thousand pounds," he said. "What cursed luck it was too late to go to the bank before I started! I had nearly ten thousand waiting me there in case of accident."

I remembered the story of the sudden crash, the flight at a minute's notice of the fraudulent financier, and the hue and cry.

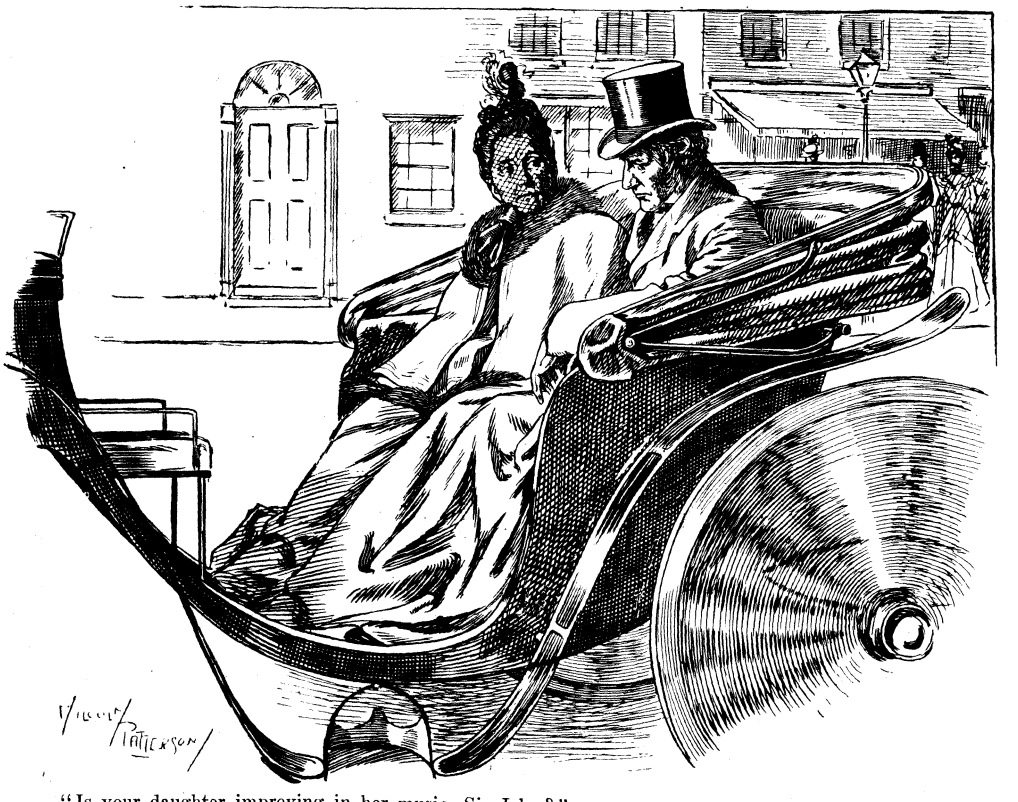
"What did you do with the money? it's only four years ago."

"I lost it at Monte Carlo. I knew they would never think I should be such a fool as to go there. Do you know that gamble made me fear there *is* a God? Why? Because I never won a single *coup* whilst losing all that money. I put on every number that should have been lucky, even on the day of the month when my child died."

He paused.

I remembered the death of that child, the one offspring of his marriage.

"Not a single *coup*. A woman sitting behind me said, 'You had better go away, monsieur. You are playing like those who shoot themselves in the garden afterwards.'"



"Is your daughter improving in her music, Sir John?"
"Well, I'm not sure whether she is improving, or whether it's only that I'm getting used to it."

I began to feel that I had had enough of Mr. Chapman; but he held me with his eye—not a glittering eye exactly, but one that seemed as if it were looking at things after a long disuse.

"Why didn't I shoot myself in the gardens? Perhaps because that play made me afraid lest there may be a God, perhaps merely because I am a coward."

He hid his face in his hands, and I think that something like tears came from his eyes, though I did not see. I looked at him almost with pity. The beautiful hands, which lacked the superb ring of opal matrix cut into a coat-of-arms that I remember, looked green against the flabby, frayed, bread-cleaned shirt cuffs and the shining sleeves of

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"HOME-KEEPING HEARTS": A TRIO OF REPRESENTATIVE AUSTRALIANS WHO ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THIS YEAR'S TEAM.

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the black coat, too small, for obviously he was growing stout despite his troubles.

"I spent a lot of money in buying stuff from chemists, one after another to get enough, and when I had a dose I spent my week's money on a good dinner, and went home to end myself. I could not take the stuff; it's in my room now with the razors I bought, though I have ceased to shave. A hundred times I have tossed up heads or tails, to-day or to-morrow. It's always to-day, but I can't do it. You see, some day the system——" He paused. "You see, I am a coward and a fool as well as a knave; and yet, if I had only had luck! Do you know that if they hadn't closed my account on the Stock Exchange as soon as I bolted, my operations by next settlement day would have saved me and my creditors."

I was beginning to get sick of the fellow. No doubt he was very miserable, hiding in a fourth rate, out-of-the-way French town, but his conduct had been infamous. Suddenly it crossed my mind that the friend who was coming to meet me in the *café* had lost a great deal of money in the smash. For a moment I thought of leaving matters to happen as they might please; but then I considered the fellow's really decent family and its humiliation and suffering if the old sore were reopened.

"Do you know who is coming to meet me in a few minutes?" I asked. "Sir George Williams."

The hunted look that had horrified me before came over his face. He got up hastily.

"I had better go. This has done me good, this chat; I haven't spoken English these three years. You've been very kind to let me speak with you. I durst not ask you to——" He paused. I put my hands in my pockets.

He started, then seemed to grow. A look of real dignity came over him.

"I didn't ask for your money—*your* money. There was a time when I could have bought fifty of you a year, body and soul."

He walked out quickly, firmly. I stole to the window—a mean thing, perhaps. No sooner was he out of the door than he seemed to shrink again, and he cast furtive glances at every corner as he shambled down the street.

DOCTOR: Are you troubled by dreams?

PATIENT: Very much! I have in my pocket now the third bill for my daughter's latest.

THE soprano shook her head and murmured, "I can't understand it."

"What's wrong?" asked the baritone.

"This paper says last night's audience was small."

"Well, it seems to me you ought to be able to understand that. Even the chairs would probably have deserted if they had not been screwed down."

"But you don't catch my meaning. The critic says the audience was small, and stops right there. He doesn't add 'but appreciative.'"

A WOMAN may not be able to drive a nail, but when it comes to driving a bargain she is in her glory.

TEACHER (to class in arithmetic): John goes marketing. He buys two and a quarter pounds of sugar at 3½*d.* a lb., two dozen eggs at a shilling a dozen, and a gallon and a half of milk at a shilling a gallon. What does it all make?

SMALLEST BOY (hesitatingly): Custards.

MRS. BROWN: So poor old Jones is gone at last. Consumption, the doctor said it were.

MRS. GREEN: That's strange; there never were any consumption in the family as I heard on.

MRS. BROWN: Oh! that don't make no difference. My sister's 'usband was carried off by gastric fever, and they never had no gas in the house at all; they burned paraffin.

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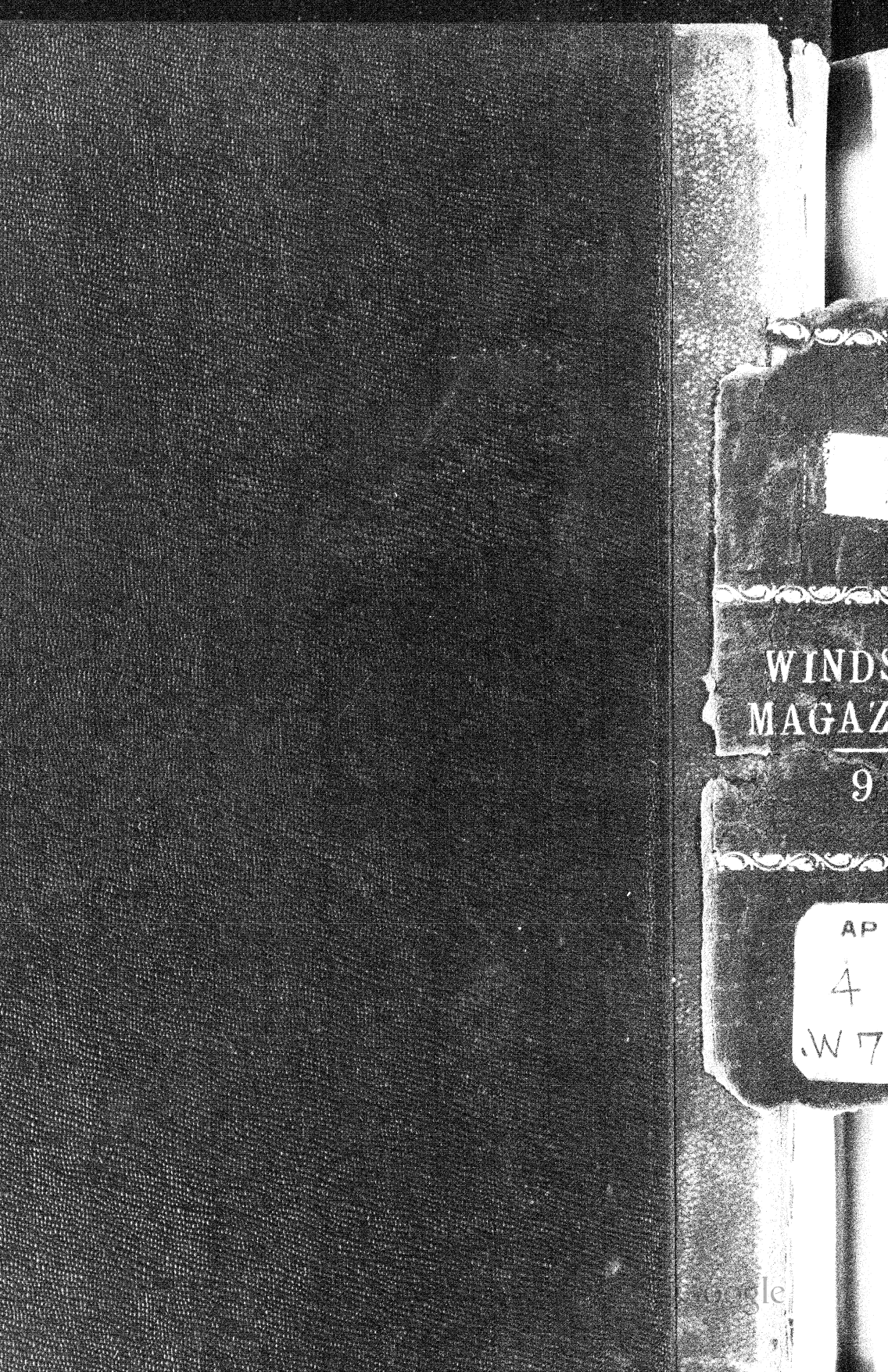
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